A SHORT HISTORY OF
LONDON

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PREFACE

THIS little book makes no pretence to be a work of research, though it is largely based on original sources. It is meant to give in brief outline the main movements in London's history for those who wish for an introduction to the subject. Perhaps it may help those London teachers who wish to enliven their history teaching with local illustrations, or those who wish to have an outline of the city's development without embarking on any very long work. In my original plan I had designed a final chapter on Modern London, mainly devoted to the growth of the present administrative system, but considerations of space obliged me to omit it. If ever this little sketch attains to the dignity of a second edition, I may be able to add this.

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ARMSTRONG COLLEGE, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.
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CHAPTER I

THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE CITY

" AMONGST the noble cities of the world that Fame doth celebrate, the city of London, chief place of the Kingdom of the English, is one that pours out its fame more widely, sends to farther lands its wealth and trade, lifts its head higher than the rest. It is happy in the healthiness of its air, in the Christian religion, in the strength of its defences, the nature of its site, the honour of its citizens, the modesty of its matrons. Pleasant in sports it is, fruitful in noble men." Such were the words that flew from the pen of an enthusiastic Londoner of the twelfth century, and they help us to realize the charm which in past days London was able to cast over those who dwelt within her walls. To-day this charm is not wholly lost, but it is parochialized, if we may use the phrase. As Boswell put it more than a century ago, " I have often amused myself with thinking how different a place London is to different people. They, whose narrow minds are concentrated to the consideration of some one particular pursuit, view it only through that medium. A politician thinks of it merely as the seat of government in its different departments, a grazier as a vast market for cattle, a mercantile man as a place where a prodigious deal of business is done upon 'Change, a dramatic enthusiast as the grand scene of theatrical entertainments, &c., but the intellectual man is struck with it as comprehending the whole of human life in all its variety, the contemplation of which is inexhaustible." It is indeed from this last point of view that London repays study, and this can only

be done by those who are ready to look back and trace the development of " human life in all its variety " through the ages.

It is a far look back to the earliest days of London as an inhabited area, so far that no one can now speak with certainty as to when men first dwelt there. Some have thought that somewhere on the city area there was at least a Celtic camp of refuge, if not a regular dwelling-place. Legend has traced the foundation of the city to the Trojans in the person of one Brutus, whose descendant Lud rebuilt the city and gave it his name; one enthusiastic mediæval writer even fixed the exact date in the days of the prophet Samuel. Modern research casts much doubt on the existence of any dwellings on the London site before the coming of the Romans, though there may have been some kind of settlement south of the Thames. Opinions differ as to whether Julius Cæsar ever reached the London district, though some think that the British chief Cassivelaunus made his last stand against the Roman invader on the site of the future city in 54 B.C. More definite is the statement of Dio, that when Aulus Plautius began the systematic conquest of the country in A.D. 43 he drove the enemy towards " the river Thames where it empties itself into the ocean and at the flow of the tide forms a lake," a description which corresponds exactly to what the present site of London must have looked like in those days. All south of the river was a vast marsh across the low-lying flats which extend to the edge of the Surrey hills at Camberwell and Peckham. At high tide this was doubtless all under water; indeed, places in Bermondsey are to this day below high-water level, and the Old Kent Road, with all the soil that has been added through nineteen centuries, is only some six or seven feet above. North of the Thames the bank rose sharply from the river as it does to-day, though here and there a little river ran down between the ridges from the Hampstead hills to the main stream. On the west there was the Westbourne, flowing through what is now Hyde Park to its outlet at Chelsea ; next

came the Tybourne, which ran down near Bond Street and across the Green Park to Westminster. The Holbourne flowed from Hampstead to King's Cross and thence along the line of Farringdon Street and under what is now Holborn Viaduct, the lower reaches being called the Fleet. Finally, on the extreme east there was, as there still is, the River Lea, which by many mouths empties itself into the Thames near the Isle of Dogs. With this last exception all these rivers have now disappeared, as they are no longer fed by the surface drainage which is carried off in sewers, but a short portion of the course of the Westbourne can still be seen in Hyde Park, where the Serpentine follows the line of the old stream.

It was probably on this northern bank that the first Roman settlement was made. Roman remains have been found both in Southwark and Westminster, but most of the evidence points to the present site of the " city " as the first place where Romans built houses. This "city" site was then divided into two parts by a little stream, later known as the Wallbrook, which ran due south from the marshes of Moorfields close by the Mansion House, and met the Thames just west of Cannon Street Station. It was, according to Professor Haverfield, most probably on the east side of this stream that the Romans founded the first " Londinium," and it was then probably that it was given its name. We do not know quite what the name means. The most popular explanation is that the word London is derived from the Welsh words " Llyn," meaning a lake, and " din," meaning a fort, and that the title was given owing to the geographical situation of the town—the lake fort ; but this has been proved quite impossible, as these words are modern Welsh, not ancient Celtic, and the word Londinium contains one root, not two. The only suggestion which is not entirely impossible is that London received its name from some early owner of the site called " Londos," which means " fierce." " Londinos " would be regularly formed from this, and though of course there can be no certainty,

it is quite likely that this suggestion is right, as places in early days were frequently called after the men to whom they belonged. In any case it was the Romans, not the Britons, who were the real founders of London's greatness.

Still it was some time before even the Romans brought London to the front among English towns. Their occupation of the country as a whole was mainly of a military nature, and as the mouth of the Thames commanded no frontier position such as Eboracum (York) in the north, and Deva (Chester) or Isca (Caerleon-on-Usk) in the west, it was not till it proved its importance as a military site that London would secure attention from the government. Meanwhile it became, so Tacitus tells us, an important commercial depot, the home of merchants and the storehouse of their wares, and it may have been for their protection that the first fortifications were thrown up. A small oblong fort, reaching from Cannon Street Station on the west to Mincing Lane on the east, was built probably early in the occupation, but even if it existed in A.D. 61, when Boadicea raised her rebellion of the eastern tribes, it was not considered worth defending, and the merchants were compelled to abandon their property or remain to fall victims to the devastating fury of the British rebels. Henceforth the growing importance of the London site is to be traced in two great events—the erection of London Bridge and the building of the city wall. The site of the first London Bridge is, like so many points of this early history, very doubtful, but from coins dragged up from the Thames it is certain that it spanned the river as early as the second century. Some antiquaries believe that the earliest Roman road from north to south crossed the Thames at Westminster, and that the road from east to west passed north of London, thus leaving the town outside the main line of traffic; others, notably Professor Haverfield, regard this as at least quite unproved; but this much is certain, that after the building of the bridge, London became a place of considerable importance. Soon all the roads began to converge on this

spot as the chief place where the Thames—the most serious obstacle to traffic in southern Britain—could be crossed, and when the so-called Antonine Itinerary came to be drawn up early in the third century, London had become either the starting-place or the terminus of almost half the routes in Britain. As the connecting link between north and south, the city became a traffic centre of no mean importance, and the Romans thus gave her that quality which she has retained to such an eminent degree right down to the present day. Even then the military importance of this site was not realized. So long as Britain remained securely in Roman hands this did not become apparent, but when troubles fell on the empire generally, attention became more concentrated on southern Britain. It was then that the wall was built, probably after the usurping Emperor Allectus had tried to establish an independent power in Britain. When faced by the attacking forces of the legitimate Emperor Constantius, he used London as the base of his operations, since it was the military key to the northern part of his territories, and though defeated, his action probably led to the building of the wall. Some would date this last Roman fortification as early as the year 200, but the weight of evidence seems to prove that it was carried out quite late in the Roman occupation. Thus London, prominent at first for trade and trade alone, thanks first to its fine harbour and later to its bridge, developed into a walled town more than half as large again as any other Romano-British settlement, and larger than York and Colchester rolled into one, a town, too, which for a brief period possessed the honoured title of Augusta.

The Romans created London; they laid down the lines of future development. The wall built by them marked out the fortifications which confined the city throughout the mediæval period, and they found out the two elements, military and commercial, which were to make the settlement at the mouth of the Thames the capital of England. But when they evacuated Britain in 410, it seemed at first

as if their work in this direction was to be entirely swept away. No sooner had they left, than the Teutonic tribes, which had for long been threatening Britain, descended in various detachments and drove the native inhabitants slowly before them. Once only do we hear of London in these troublous times, when, after the defeat of Crayford in 456, the Britons " forsook Kent and fled to London." Sir Laurence Gomme believes that it was the London army which was here defeated, since he argues that in Roman days Crayford was the boundary of the city's territorium— the district which the Romans attached to all their towns. In any case, from that date till the year 604 the name of London is not once recorded in the pages of history. Unlike later Danish invaders, the Saxons never used the Thames as a highway into the heart of the country; uncivilized as they were, they preferred the open country to towns, to the use of which they were entire strangers. And so London was neglected—not captured, not destroyed, but just ignored. Controversy rages among modern historians as to what happened within the walls during this long silence. Some picture a deserted site, believing that the Romano-British population fled, either to fall into the enemy's hands or to make good their escape to the Welsh hills, that grass grew in the streets, the voice of man was not heard, and one by one the houses fell into decay. On the other hand many believe that there is sufficient evidence to prove that the city was never entirely deserted. They argue that the facts that the mediæval walls and streets followed the lines of the Roman city, and that certain customs of mediæval London can be traced to a Roman origin, all tend to prove continuous habitation, or else there would have been none to hand down the tradition. Be this as it may, it is obvious that Anglo-Saxon London began not within the walls of Londinium, but without; that settlements appeared at Kensington, Fulham, Paddington, Islington, Stepney, Lambeth, and Camberwell, all round the city site in fact, and that it was not till much later that

London itself became the centre of an Anglo-Saxon population.

As peace and unity grew among the Saxon kingdoms founded on the ruins of Roman power in Britain, the conquerors began to learn one of the first lessons of growing civilization—the use of towns. Moreover, the coming of Christianity, both from north and south, brought with it the knowledge of an older civilization, and it is significant that the first mention of London after the long silence of 150 years is connected with the missionizing of the country. Under the year 604 we read in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle : " This year Augustine hallowed two bishops, Mellitus and Justus. He sent Mellitus to preach baptism to the East Saxons, whose king was called Saberct, son of Ricula, sister of Ethelbert, whom Ethelbert had there set as king. And Ethelbert gave to Mellitus a bishop's seat at London, and to Justus he gave Rochester." Bede tells us that Ethelbert founded St. Paul's Cathedral, which, having been a Temple of Diana and a Christian church in turn, had fallen into decay since Roman days. Though there is some evidence to substantiate this statement, many cast doubts on its authenticity, despite the fact that there are legends of earlier bishops of London than Mellitus. Mellitus is at least the first bishop of the new line, and from this time forward Christianity made slow but steady progress in the city. True, Mellitus was before long compelled to flee, and Essex had to be reconverted by Cedd, brother of St. Chad, but in the end the bishop came to take a place of preponderating importance in London, which, restored to a great position, developed side by side with the growth of Christianity. This is illustrated by the career of Erkenwald, who as bishop seems to have enjoyed a considerable civic position. An evangelizer of considerable power, founder of the neighbouring nunnery of Barking in Essex, he became the father of his people and, as it were, the first patron saint of the city. He enjoyed something of the magisterial position held by the Italian and Frankish

bishops, and it was he who cared for the temporal welfare of his bishopric by rebuilding the northern gate, which ever afterwards was known as Bishopsgate in his memory. Thus London illustrated a development which was going on in the kingdom at large, where the bishop was coming to sit side by side with Ealdorman in the Shire court.

Still, as a political unit, London never came to the front in Anglo-Saxon days. Situated in Essex as she was, she never was the chief town of any of the kingdoms which rose to a preponderating position over the others in the days of the so-called Heptarchy. From the dominion of Kent, under which we found her in 604, she passed in turn under the control of Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex; and even in the last case her importance was overshadowed politically by the Wessex capital of Winchester. But in matter of trade this was not the case. London's superb geographical position, which had developed her commerce in Roman days, now kept the place a living, growing entity. Despite numerous fires, for between 674 and 801 the city was burnt down three times, prosperity increased by leaps and bounds. There is frequent mention of " Lundun-tunes Hythe " or landing-place, " Lundenwic " or market place, and the " wicreve " appointed by the King. A regular tariff was imposed on the goods brought by ships into the port, as we know by an exemption quoted by King Ethelbert in 754. Still more striking is the evidence of Edgar's laws, for it was then ordered " Let one weight and one measure pass, such as is observed at London and Winchester." It is thereby obvious that, by the tenth century, Winchester, despite her preponderating political importance and the prestige of being the home of kings, took second place to London in commercial matters. It is abundantly clear that at every stage London owed her development to her geographical position, more evident during the Anglo-Saxon period in matters of trade than in politics. It remained for the Danes finally to point out what the Romans began late to perceive— the strategic importance of the site in operations of war.

When the Viking pirates began to harass the English shores and even to penetrate inland, it might seem that history was merely repeating itself. The same northern fiords poured forth the same long black boats, manned, too, by men of a race similar to the Saxon pirates. But in ultimate effect upon England, and upon London in particular, the influence of these invasions was quite different. From the first the Danes used the Thames as a means of getting into the centre of England, and therefore the city, which, thanks to its bridge, commanded this river, was from the first an object of attack. In 839 there was a " great slaughter in London," and in 851 " came three hundred and fifty ships to the mouth of the Thames and landed and took London and Canterbury by storm." These laconic entries in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle give us an idea of the way London suffered, and when the raids gave place to organized attempts at conquest and settlement, it was London that the Danes used as their base of operations, notably when they strove to penetrate into the heart of Wessex by way of the Thames. On the other hand, when in 872 Alfred took up the task of driving back the invader, he was compelled to recognize the importance of London, and though by the Treaty of Wedmore in 878 he was obliged to leave his objective in the enemy's hands, he never forgot his goal, and in 884, or at latest in 886, he gained his point, and was able to draw his famous demarcation between English and Danish territory, which by following the line of the River Lea gave the city to him. Then " King Alfred restored London and all the Angle race turned to him that were not in bondage of the Danish men." What exactly was the extent of this restoration we do not know; the ruined walls, which had offered such slight resistance to the Danes, were probably rebuilt, and perhaps new gates were made, for the city was destined to play its part in that chain of fortified places used to drive back the Danelaw ever east-wards. Naturally the Danes strove to reconquer their lost ground, and they were aware that London was the key to

the military position.   In 894 and again in 896 they sailed up the Thames, but before they could become dangerous they were driven off by sorties from the town or by the circumspectness of Alfred.   Thus the Londoners were coming to learn their military importance; they had begun their long career of military glory, and were able to take a pride in the fact that the possession of their home was of paramount importance to both parties.

When the long struggle between Dane and English once more changed its character, and the latter were face to face with an organized attack led by King Sweyn, with no better leader to oppose him than Ethelred the Redeless, the Londoners did not forget the martial lessons of Alfred.   Again and again it was they who saved the situation when it looked blackest.   Thus when Olaf of Norway combined with Sweyn against the city " they sustained more harm and evil than they ever deemed that any townsmen could do to them," and learnt the lesson that it was not only those brought up to the wild life of the sea or the country districts who could show grit when sword met sword.   Deserted by their king, surrounded by Danes, still the gallant citizens held out, for the enemy " often fought against the town of London, but to God be praise that it yet stands sound and they have ever failed."   Thus cried the Anglo-Saxon chronicler in 1009, but he must have trembled at his heart when in 1012 a great force of Danes at Greenwich threatened the city, which had to witness the murder of Archbishop Alphege under her very walls.   At length in 1013, when further resistance was useless, when Ethelred had fled in craven fear to the Continent, and there was no one to help them, unconquered but bowing to necessity, the Londoners admitted Sweyn within their walls.   The heroism of the townsmen through those troublous times was long a living memory in the land, and a century later William of Malmesbury allowed full play to his flowery style when recounting their deeds.   " They were men laudable in the extreme, and such as Mars himself would not have disdained to

encounter, had they possessed a competent leader. Even while they were supported by the mere shadow of one, they risked every chance of battle, nay, even a siege of several months' endurance."

Sweyn's triumph was short-lived. He succumbed to his first London winter, and the next year saw the return of Ethelred, supported, it is said, by his recent foe, King Olaf. The story of his return is told in the famous collection of Icelandic Sagas known as the Heimskringla. At least so it would seem, though there is considerable confusion as to dates, which has led some to think that the description applies to another occasion. Olaf and Ethelred arrived together at the mouth of the Thames, determined to secure London as their first step. They found London Bridge— that wonderful engineering feat, which was " so broad that two waggons could pass each other on it "—strongly held by the Danes, but the Norwegians agreed to row right up to the barrier if the English would do likewise. So the attack began. On pressed the boats, despite the cloud of missiles that fell upon them, and they managed to get hawsers round the bridge piers. Then rowing down stream once more, the strain on the supports of the bridge, combined with the weight of the defenders who stood on it, was such, that " London Bridge was broken down." Presumably the river front, west of the bridge, was not adequately defended, and the allied forces easily made themselves masters of the city. Whatever the truth of these dramatic details, Ethelred was welcomed back to London, where he ended his life, sinking into his dishonoured grave in 1016. The last great test of London's military resourcefulness was yet to come, for from the first Ethelred's son, Edmund, had to meet the active opposition of Sweyn's son, Cnut. Indeed, outside the city the Dane was chosen King, but the Londoners were faithful to the Saxon line, and Edmund became both by election and by residence a London King. Once during his troubled reign, when he was gathering forces in the west, Cnut laid siege to London with all the panoply of war. He

ringed the city round with a ditch on the land side, and unable to win London Bridge, cut a canal round the bridge-head in Southwark through which he dragged his ships to complete the blockade on the river front. But all his best efforts failed, and he had to raise the siege when Edmund advanced from the west. The Londoners had survived the greatest and last siege of their history. But the Dane was not to be denied. Treachery accomplished what force would never have achieved, and when news came that Edmund had been foully murdered, there was nothing to be done but welcome Cnut within the walls. Once again London, proud and unconquered, accepted the rule of a Danish king.

Thus for a brief period London came entirely under Danish influence. The newcomers were so akin both in race and ideas to the existing inhabitants, that they quickly settled down contentedly side by side, and soon Danish names such as Ansgar and Ulf were to be found among the citizens. But probably the larger portion of Danes gathered in separate communities outside the town as they did at Rochester, since Greenwich and Woolwich by their names point to Scandinavian origin, and nearer the city probably a large settlement gathered round the church of St. Clement Danes. When Cnut's son Harold came to be buried it was here that a suitable resting-place was found, and the cross which stood in later days opposite the Bishop of Worcester's house—now Somerset House—probably marked the site of the open-air meeting-place where the community transacted its business. Within the city, too, there stands a church, the dedication of which is reminiscent of Viking days, for St. Olave's, Hart Street, commemorates that Olaf who stormed London Bridge, and, by one of those strange accidents which occasionally mark the Church's calendar, became canonized at the bidding of his Norwegian subjects. The internal organization of London lost nothing by the Danish occupation. If anything her municipal order was improved, and it is a significant fact that the word " Hust-

ing," of Danish origin, is still used to describe the court at which the Lord Mayor is elected. She was allowed to develop her trade under the peaceful administration of Cnut, and in political power her " lithsmen "—probably traders—were allowed to take part in national assemblies. Already it was the custom for the Witan to meet within her walls for one of the three great assemblies held every year, and for a time she became the home of England's King. As yet too independent, too little a part of the nation, to be called the capital, London was nevertheless the chief English town of Danish days. What the Romans had started, the Saxons—after an interval—had continued, and finally the Danes, partly indirectly, but also partly directly, had brought the city to the front, and placed it in a position from which it was never to recede.

CHAPTER II

NORMAN LONDON

Roman, Saxon, and Dane had all played their part in building up London's greatness, but there was yet another foreign invasion which was to help mould the city's destiny. The Norman conquest of London was no sudden event, but a steady development which came to a head in 1066. Before the actual advent of William the Conqueror the city had felt the full force of Norman influence. In Edward the Confessor's time many of the associates of his youth in Normandy were brought over and placed in important and lucrative positions in England. William, Bishop of London, was one of these imports, but royal favourites—as we may call them—were by no means the only Normans that came to London. Long before 1066 Norman merchants in large numbers frequented the city, and in the Confessor's days the port of Dowgate, at the mouth of the Wallbrook, was set aside for their exclusive use. Many of these visitors stayed to settle, secured the rights of citizenship, and by 1066 had become a flourishing Norman colony too large to be ignored by any ruler. Thus, when in the hour of conquest, or at least soon after, William granted London's first authentic charter, he addressed the " Burghers of London both French and English." This doubtless became a stereotyped form after 1066, as it appears in documents addressed by later kings to other towns, but at this early stage it proves the existence of a Norman population in London before the actual conquest. Moreover this sup-position is strengthened by the fact that the only two

names mentioned in the charter—William, Bishop of London, and Geoffrey the " Portreeve "—are both those of Normans. From other sources we learn of many Norman residents in London soon after 1066, men of prominence and renown, such as Gilbert Becket, the father of St. Thomas and a native of Rouen, and his relative Osbern Huit-Deniers, who could not have attained to this position during the Norman period had not the way been prepared for them by numerous earlier immigrants.

The Londoners by no means always welcomed all these foreign dwellers within their walls. To the traders they wisely offered no objection, but their attitude to the Norman favourites of the Confessor, with the possible exception of their own bishop, was one of consistent opposition. When Earl Godwin—conscious that this Norman influence would ultimately lead to the accession of William of Normandy to the throne—made his stand against the foreigner and was banished in 1051, his return in the following year was facilitated by the support of the Londoners. It was to London that he came to demand restoration to his estates, and it was a mass meeting of Londoners in Southwark which successfully demanded his pardon. Similarly when William landed in England to claim the crown which had been placed on Harold's head, the citizens showed no signs of welcoming him. Far from this, they actually assisted the resistance to his advance. When Harold rushed down from the North to meet the invader, he made straight for London and was there joined by a chosen band of citizens led by Ansgar the " Staller," who was granted the privilege of providing a special escort for the King and his standard. Both sides realized the importance of holding London. Gyrth advised his brother Harold to stay and guard the city, while he himself led the army forth to battle, and after the fatal day of Senlac William almost at once advanced towards London. But the spirit of the citizens was not quenched, and when the Normans approached, they sallied forth only to be defeated with loss. Still London held out.

William burnt a portion of Southwark to strike terror into
the hearts of the citizens, and then marched up the banks
of the Thames to seek a crossing.   When this was accom-
plished, whether at Wallingford, Goring, Richmond, or,
according to the latest theory, at Old Brentford, the Norman
forces were soon ready to besiege London.   Bereft of support,
seeing Archbishop Stigand, Earls Edwin and Morkere, and
others of importance making their submission, the Londoners
surrendered.   We hear stories of Ansgar, wounded at Senlac,
being carried in a litter about the streets exhorting to
resistance ; we hear, too, of bribes used by William to buy
the support of this leader, but whatever truth there may be
in these, in the end the Londoners agreed to admit William,
who was duly crowned at Westminster on Christmas Day.

In thus accepting William as King the Londoners were
doing the wise thing, but they doubtless did not realize the
full significance of their action.   The Conqueror was deter-
mined to be sovereign indeed, and this entailed the unifica-
tion of all England under his control.   Hitherto the English
tradition had been local independence.   The Londoners
had selected Edmund as their King regardless of the action
of other parts of the country ; they now did the same by
William.   He should be King of London, and it mattered
not what line of action others took.   The city had hitherto
acted quite independently of the rest of England, and had
held a position which assimilated to that of the German
Free Cities of the Empire.   The great change brought about
by William and his immediate successors was the centrali-
zation of the kingdom and the welding of the English into
one nation, not a loose confederation of independent units.
This entailed a loss of local independence, such as London
could ill brook, but it was more than counterbalanced by
the protection it gave to the weak against the strong.   The
main danger to the Norman kings was the separatist ten-
dency of feudalism ; so it was to London, though she knew
it not, and the history of the next few years was woven
round the clash of London's ideal of civic independence,

which had in it something of the feudal spirit, and the Norman Kings' passion for centralization. The keynote to this struggle is struck at the very outset by the terms of William's charter to the city, granted probably shortly after his coronation. "William King greets William Bishop and Geoffrey Portreeve and all the burghers within London, French and English, friendly. And I make known unto you that I will that ye be all lawworthy that were in King Edward's day, and I will that each shall be his father's heir after his father's day, and I will not suffer that any man do you any wrong. God give you health." There is nothing new in this charter; it is merely a confirmation of past privileges, but the very confirmation itself and the language in which it is couched have their significance. It was as though William took into his hands all the liberties of London, which had been hers by right, and regranted them of his own royal will. It was the act of a despot, not that of a successor to the half-hearted rule of the Confessor. London was henceforth to be ruled directly under royal guidance, and was no longer to be a law-making corporation such as it had been in the past. Its privileges were to be enjoyed only of royal grace. In return the King would not suffer that any man should do the Londoners wrong, they were to enjoy royal protection, they were not to be the victims of a turbulent aristocracy or the local feudal magnate, as were so often the towns of the Continent and notably those of France. It was, indeed, a charter of liberty to the citizens, but not as they understood the word; it was meant to emphasize authority, not to grant new rights, and its ultimate effect was to break down London's separatism and to draw her once and for all into the whirlpool of national politics.

Still, even in face of the strong Norman Kings London had sufficient power to make some terms. Thus when the Conqueror had his famous Domesday Book compiled, the chief city in the land was not included in the survey. Though it is inconceivable that William would have been ready to

waive his claims to all taxation from the richest city in his dominions—for Domesday Book was no more really than a valuation for fiscal purposes—it would seem that he agreed to make some kind of special arrangement with the London citizens. At the same time William and his successors were all very careful to bridle the Londoners and their known independent spirit, and perhaps the best monument to their attitude is to be found to-day in the Tower of London, which they built. Begun by the Conqueror, the White Tower, or central block as we know it, was carried to its completion by his successors with the assistance of the able architect Gundulf, Bishop of Rochester; the outer precincts, surrounded by wall and moat, being added by later hands. A huge mass of masonry, standing almost four-square, it was designed from the first more as a fortress than as a royal dwelling-place. Devoid of comfort, it possessed no partitions that were not of wood, save those which encompassed the beautiful chapel of St. John, and it was really intended as a place of refuge in days of turmoil, and still more as a watch-dog to overawe the citizens. Situated, as it was, on the city wall, it might seem to be intended for the protection of the citizens, but they were under no illusions as to this. It was totally free from their control—to this day it is outside the confines of the city's authority—and they always hated it for the principle embodied therein. In 1239 they made a grievance of the extension and strengthening of its fortifications, and in 1241 a priest could draw crowds of admirers by describing how in a vision he had seen its walls crumble before the frown of saintly Thomas Becket.

In one respect, however, London was less subject to royal influence than other towns in Europe which became the capitals of their kingdoms, for the King had no permanent residence in her midst. During the days of Danish attack and conquest London had become practically the administrative centre of the kingdom and the home of kings. But Edward the Confessor, who looked on the Londoners with

more fear than liking, adopted Westminster as his home. There he took under his particular patronage the Benedictine monastery, which after the troubles of the Danish raids had been refounded by St. Dunstan, and built its church. There he made his home, and William I, anxious always to pose as heir to the Confessor's policy, followed his example. Thus London was left free to develop her institutions on wider lines than if she had had the constant and close interference of the King in her midst, while having the advantage of near access to him when she required his protection. In days when the administration of the law was a personal interest of the sovereign, the King's palace was also the home of justice, and the law courts grew up within the precincts of his dwelling. At first migratory with the King, these courts tended to become fixed in one place, which was naturally the chief palace of the King, and so Westminster became the seat of the law courts, easy of access, but yet outside the liberties of the city, as indeed they remain down to the present day. To-day, when the term " London " has spread over districts far beyond the confines of the mediæval city, it is hard to realize the significance of this distinction, but the fact remains that so far as the term capital is conferred on a town by the presence therein of a country's central administration, London city has never enjoyed this distinction.

Despite the advantages derived by the Londoners from the stern administration of the Norman Kings, they never accepted the limitation of their independence with any sign of content. They were anxious to contract out of the national system, and at least once they were able to wring a considerable concession of independence from Henry I. From him they secured the privilege of paying an annual " ferm " of £300 in lieu of all sums due to the crown from London and Middlesex, and of electing their own Sheriff, who was to be responsible for this payment, as well as a local administrator of justice known as the Justiciar. These privileges were only of a temporary nature. The Justiciar

was an officer who passed away almost immediately, and succeeding kings did not confirm the right to elect the Sheriff, who was in very essence a royal official representing the interests of the crown in each county. Still this is an indication of the way the Londoners strove to regain their past independence, and they tried to make the best of the opportunities in this direction which offered on the death of Henry I.

From the first during the disputed succession between Stephen and Matilda the citizens leant to the side of the former, who made straight for London on hearing of his uncle's death. They were influenced doubtless by a variety of reasons. As one who was an eye-witness put it, " Every realm was open to mishap when the presence of all rule and head of justice was lacking. Delay was impossible in this election of a king who was needed to restore justice and the law."

This was the more apparent as the London district was at the moment terrorized by a knight of the late King's court, who was levying blackmail and plundering the waggons bringing merchandise into the city. Perhaps personal reasons also influenced the citizens, as the Normans among them had an hereditary hatred for Matilda's Angevin relatives, and above all, as they told Matilda herself later, they desired to throw off the grievous laws of Henry I, and secure the restoration of the good laws of the Confessor. In other words, they desired a return to the independence they had enjoyed before the Norman Conquest. Thus it was in London that Stephen was elected King, and largely by London citizens. Few magnates and fewer bishops were present when the bell which stood near the east end of St. Paul's precincts was rung, and the folkmoot of citizens gathered in the open market-place to acclaim the new sovereign. Between them and Stephen a " pactio " was drawn up, which contained a mutual obligation, whereby Stephen agreed to protect London, while the citizens promised to obey him so long as he governed well, with the

implication that they would cease to do so, did he break his side of the contract. This " mutuum jaramentum " is strongly reminiscent of the action of foreign towns which enjoyed communal liberties ; it suggests that the Londoners were reverting to the old tradition of Edmund Ironsides' days, and choosing their own king irrespective of the attitude of the country at large ; indeed it seems to be implied by the statement, made by an eye-witness of these events, that the burghers of London claimed that " their right and special privilege it was that on their King's death his successor should be provided by them." Like Edmund, Stephen was crowned, not at Westminster, but at St. Paul's, and apparently the significance of this and of all the events which led up to it, was that he was chosen as King of London rather than as King of England.

In many ways London had to pay dear for this declaration of independence. The King they chose was quite unable to defend them, partly because of his innate weakness of character, partly because he could not claim the national position of his predecessors, and was therefore totally incapable of controlling the turbulent and disruptive forces of feudalism. What London suffered in this direction may be realized by a glance at the career of Geoffrey de Mandeville, Earl of Essex, the sworn foe of the citizens as he declared himself. Typical of those adventurers who used the long contest between Stephen and Matilda as a means of self-aggrandizement, he accumulated offices and titles from both parties, to whom he alternately sold himself. As Constable of the Tower, he used his position to harass the Londoners ; later he even secured the Sheriffdom and Justiciarship of London and Middlesex in defiance of Henry I's recent charter. London, all through, had to bewail that, like so many Continental towns, she had fallen into the hands of the local feudal despot. It was the price of independence of royal control. But it cannot be denied that the position of London, as a corporate organization, was strengthened during the days of anarchy. More than once she seemed to

hold the balance between the two parties. Thus when
Stephen had been captured and Henry Bishop of Winchester
summoned a council at his episcopal seat to obtain the
acceptance of Matilda, he described the London envoys as
" quasi barones," thus recognizing their importance both
social and political; nay more, he adjourned the conference
for a day so as to enable these same envoys to be present.
When later Matilda was received into London and prepara-
tions for her coronation were on foot, she so exasperated the
citizens by her demands for money and her unconciliatory
manner, that they rose in their wrath and drove her a hapless
fugitive from their midst. Her cause, which was at last
seeming to prosper, was thus set back, and declined from that
day forward. Moreover, during these troublous days the
city was able to secure something of self-government. It
might be harassed by Geoffrey de Mandeville, but it obviously
carried on some kind of government, and at least on some
occasions had a means of corporate expression. Perhaps the
citizens now aspired to secure a Commune on French lines,
such as later they achieved. In any case, when their
envoys appeared at Winchester, William of Malmesbury
describes them as coming " from the community of the
Londoners, as they call it." The term was obviously
a strange one to the chronicler, and it may be that the
Londoners had set up some kind of communal government
which helped to give strength to the city during days of
anarchy.

But if London in Stephen's days managed to secure
independence of a character dangerous to national unity,
she lost it under Henry II. The Angevin King was no
friend to local independence as against the power of the
central government. True, he granted a charter to London,
but he was careful not to confirm the privilege of electing
Sheriff and Justiciar, which his grandfather had conceded.
His reign was uneventful in London development. There
were signs from time to time that the citizens were irked by
his " oppression," as they called it, though probably this

meant little more than the curtailing of civic independence. Perhaps it was due to London's dislike of Henry II that his great opponent Thomas Becket came to be regarded with such reverence. He was a Londoner born and bred, and his tragic end struck the imagination of all England, but it was something more than this that made the citizens cherish his memory—the fact that he stood for liberties which clashed with Henry's desire for national centralization. All through the Middle Ages the Londoners regarded St. Thomas as their patron saint ; his effigy appeared on their official seal, and the monks of Canterbury on one occasion obtained a loan from them by urging that the great martyr, whose tomb they cherished, was a Londoner born. Within the city the monastery of St. Thomas Acon was founded on the site of his father's home, and across the bridge the Hospital of St. Thomas commemorated his career right down to the Reformation.

Once again London bided her time, and seized the opportunity for civic aggrandizement so soon as it came. This opportunity occurred when Richard I, having succeeded his father, had gone to spend his superfluous energies in the Crusades. Before leaving he did his best to complicate the problems of government at home by changing his mind more than once as to whom should be given the task of administration. Accordingly troubles began almost at once, for his brother John saw an excellent chance of securing the control of the kingdom, if not the throne itself. He instituted a campaign against the Regent, William Longchamp, Bishop of Ely, who had made many enemies. Selfish, greedy, perhaps even oppressive, Longchamp was nevertheless faithful to his master and an honest administrator. But he failed to convince the nation generally that John was aiming at the throne, and when he addressed the Londoners in the Guildhall on the subject, his reception was so unfavourable that he fled for safety to the Tower. He had alienated a large majority of the citizens, led by Richard Fitz-Reiner, by extending the Tower fortifications,

though a small minority, headed by Henry de Cornhill, stood by him. Thus when it was known that John was approaching the city, large crowds trooped out to meet him, and escorted him with torches to the house of Fitz-Reiner, where he lodged. Next day, after a meeting of magnates in St. Paul's, the citizens, assembled in the folkmoot by the bell, declared for the deposition of Longchamp, and accompanying John out to East Smithfield by the Tower, summoned the Regent to surrender. When Longchamp humbly took his way to the Continent, John had won the day, but it was the Londoners who reaped the real fruits of victory. Fitz-Reiner had told John quite clearly what the terms of London's support were, and when the citizens agreed to the deposition of Longchamp and to support John's succession to the throne, they had already received a confirmation of the London Commune.

Thus on October 8, 1191, the Londoners got what they had probably long sought, what Richard of Devizes says neither Richard nor his father would have conceded them for many thousands of marks. So far as we can gather they gained the right to have a Mayor and magistrates known as " skivini " and other " probi homines," who should act with them. To find here the direct ancestors of the courts of Aldermen and Common Council is to read too much into past facts in the light of later institutions, but it was not long after this that the Aldermen of the wards emerged as part of the civic organization. At first they seem to have been largely hereditary officials, but when the organization of the city in wards had become definite in the days of Edward I, the Aldermen also became their elected representatives. But more lay behind the Commune than this mere recognition of civic magistrates. The whole idea was obviously borrowed from France, where the communes were towns which possessed the privilege of being no longer regarded as part of the king's demesne, but as territorial vassals. There was a feudal and separatist element in the movement, which led some before long to declare that

" the Londoners have no other King save the Mayor of
London." It was this aspect of the movement, which may
almost be called a revolution, that the chronicler means
that Richard would never have accepted; it was this which
connected it with the old struggle of the past. It was
doubtless this kind of commune which had at least been
partially organized in the days of Stephen. Probably its
outward and visible sign, the Mayor, had existed unofficially
for some time. He appears, in the person of Henry Fitz-
Eylwin of London Stone, for the first time officially in 1193,
in a document which pledges the citizens to fidelity to
Richard, then a prisoner in Germany, and to the London
constitution, but a contemporary chronicler gives a list of
mayors from the beginning of his narrative in 1189. Doubt-
less there had been such an officer unofficially chosen for
some time past, and John gave him official sanction, so far
as his permission can be taken to have any legal authority.
Richard never seems to have confirmed his brother's action,
though he did not interfere with the Mayor, who kept office
for life. Even John at his accession did not trouble to stand
by his former action, for he compelled the citizens to affirm
their dependence by paying a large sum for the restoration
of the privilege of holding the Sheriffdom of London and
Middlesex. Nothing was then said about the Mayor, but
when troubles were closing thick and fast round John's
head, he issued a charter in May 1215 which gave the
" barons " of the city the right to elect every year from
their own number a mayor, who was to be " presented "
to the King, or in his absence to the Justiciar, and swear
fealty to him, the outgoing mayor each year being eligible
for re-election. But this was not legally speaking a con-
firmation of the Commune, nor when later in the same year
in Magna Carta John confirmed London's liberties did he
include the Commune therein; nay more, he did not
resign the right to tallage the city as being on the royal
demesne, since Henry III successfully maintained this
privilege. The cry for the Commune, indeed, had served

its turn. London was becoming more national in her outlook. Like the barons outside, the " barons " of London were beginning to shed their separatist ideas and to realize that it was a nobler ambition to control the fate of the kingdom as a whole, than to put a ring fence round their own little territory and be free from outside interference. The civic constitution was won, the elected mayor was the city's chief magistrate and representative. Henceforth London was indeed part of the kingdom, a part too which ever took a more and more important position in national politics and wielded a power which no mere " free city " could have possessed.

Throughout the days when London was struggling towards corporate organization, she was also steadily developing in commerce and social amenities. By this time the Roman city had blossomed into a flourishing mediæval town, famous for its business population and the free, happy life of its inhabitants. We are given a glimpse of this side of London life by William Fitz-Stephen, a Canterbury monk, who wrote a life of his master Thomas Becket in the year 1174. Wishing to show the setting of the Saint's early life, he prefixed to his work a description of London, which pictures a happy, contented place full of life and merriment, even when we have discounted the enthusiasm which goes to the length of naming an ideal climate among its charms. The city wall with its seven double gates encompassed the same area as in Roman days, but the population had already spread beyond the fortifications, and a populous suburb lay to the west, between the city and Westminster, where the " incomparable building " of the royal palace rose conspicuous above the higher reaches of the river. All suburban homes possessed " spacious and beautiful gardens," and to the north of the city there were pastures and pleasant meadow lands, through which flowed little streams " where the turning wheels of mills are put in motion with a cheerful sound." Elsewhere, near the walls, lay arable land, well tilled and fruitful, while hard by was " a great forest, with

woodland pastures, coverts of wild animals, stags, fallow deer, boars, and wild bulls," some remains of which we may perhaps trace to-day in Kenwood, Hainault, and Epping Forests. The whole space within the walls was not covered by houses. In the centre was the great open market-place of Cheap with booths standing in lines, at which the citizens bought their wares. To this day, as we wander along Cheapside, we can trace the lines of those booths by the streets which lead off to right and left, and by their names we can gather how the various commodities were given each their appointed place. Bread Street, Fish Street, and Friday Street ; Honey Lane, Ironmonger Lane, and many similar titles help us to reconstruct the marketings of our far-off ancestors. This open market-place extended from St. Paul's on the west to the Wallbrook on the east. Across the bridge which spanned this latter stream lay East Cheap, another open market-place, where Gracechurch Street records that it was here that grass and other country produce was sold. East and West Cheap were in fact large permanent fairs, such as may still be seen in some German towns. But besides these daily markets there was held every Friday in the " smooth field " outside London—that is West Smithfield—" a famous show of noble horses for sale." There were gathered chargers for knights, " elegant of form, noble of stature, with ears quickly tremulous, necks lifted, haunches plump," besides horses for squires, and sumpter horses fit for heavy weights. The " smooth field " was found an excellent place for burghers to try their intended purchases in an improvised race, where " the riders contend for the love of praise and hope of victory." In another part of the field the agriculturist could buy stock for his farm, " implements of husbandry, swine with long flanks, cows with full udders, oxen of great size, and woolly flocks." It is, perhaps, then not wholly unhistorical that London's great meat-market should stand to-day on the Smithfield site.

Even in these early days the traders and sellers did not, as

a rule, live at their places of business, but the wealthier doubtless in some pleasant suburban home, the poorer in other parts of the city itself. Probably there were as yet few stone buildings; indeed, Fitz-Stephen declares that one of the few drawbacks to life in the city was the frequency of fires, which must have spread rapidly among the closely packed wooden buildings, which like all houses of the time overhung the street in their upper stories. Still, some fine houses of stone there must have been, for already it was a mark of greatness to have a " Town House." " Nearly all the bishops, abbots and magnates of England " had in London " their own splendid houses to which they resort, when summoned to great councils by the King or by their metropolitan, or drawn thither by their own private affairs." Much of the prosperity of the town was due to its becoming more and more a political centre, for Fitz-Stephen tells us these great lords spent largely when they came to town; indeed, many years later, in the days of Richard II, when the magnates showed their anger at the Londoners' politics by refusing to occupy their town houses, it was found necessary to open a fund to bribe them to come back. But there were other more substantial bases on which the city's growing wealth was founded. Her harbour was becoming more and more crowded with shipping, and if Henry II did nothing else for the city, he at least brought it into close contact with Guienne and Gascony, with which a prosperous trade sprang up.

Perhaps the busiest place in the whole city was the riverside, where was situated a public cook-shop owned by the city.* It catered for all tastes and for all purses. Coarse foods for the poor, delicacies for the rich, such as none could wish improved. Fitz-Stephen tells us it was of the greatest value to the citizens, for if friends came unexpectedly to anyone's house they might be taken

* This is one reading of the passage, though another manuscript of Fitz-Stephen's work has *ad civilitatem pertinens*, not *ad civitatem pertinens*. But the context seems to be in favour of the latter reading.

there, and it could cater for any number of soldiers or
travellers who wished for a meal as they passed through
the city. This wonderful restaurant, which seems to have
combined all the virtues of Lockhart's and the Ritz, reveals
to us the essentially democratic nature of city customs at
this period. Now, and for many a year to come, rich and
poor sat side by side at their meals, played side by side in
their games, and worked side by side in their industries.
Side by side too they sat, as children, in the schools, of which
London could boast those attached to three principal
churches, St. Paul's, Holy Trinity, Aldgate, and St. Martin's-
le Grand, as well as a less famous one at St. Mary-le-Bow.
The system of instruction there followed was quite the best
type of mediæval teaching. Dialectics took a prominent
place in the curriculum, and scholars were taught not only
to reason closely, but to do so in language which should
attract by the beauty of its style. The spirit of emulation
was encouraged by pitting the boys of two schools against
each other in verse composition and in the intricacies of
grammar. Of the education of girls we hear nothing, as
Fitz-Stephen evidently had a monkish reticence about the
opposite sex; indeed, his only allusion to the part played by
women in London life is the somewhat terse remark that
" the city matrons are true Sabine women." But he was
no mere cloistered priest, for he took a keen interest in the
sports and pastimes of the city, especially those of the
young, " for we all once were children ourselves."

Each season had its appropriate game. On Shrove
Tuesday the scholars brought with them cocks to school,
and with the assistance of their masters set them to fight all
the morning. During the spring months they played a
sort of football in the fields, while their elders practised
military exercises and fought sham battles, with the " ancient
and worthy men of the city " as spectators. In the Easter
holidays the young men and lads took part in a sort of
water carnival. A pole with a shield affixed was planted
in the water, and youths, armed with lances, stood in the

bows of oarless boats which were carried toward the pole by the force of the stream. Their object was to break their lances against the shield without falling into the water, but if they did fall, a boat lay hard by to pick them up. " Upon the bridge and in the houses by the riverside stood great numbers of people to see and laugh thereat." In summer the lads practised jumping, shooting, wrestling, stone-throwing and other sports, while the maidens danced till darkness fell. When the sheets of water on Moorfields, just outside the northern wall of the city, were frozen in winter, all sorts of sports were practised on the ice, despite the frequent broken arms and legs. " Some, striding wide, take long slides; others make themselves seats of ice as large as millstones, on which one sits while many others drag him till one slipping all fall together. Others, more expert on the ice, tie beneath their feet and heels animal bones, and bearing a staff with a sharp spike at the end, do strike the ice with it, and thus glide as swiftly as a bird through the air or as an arrow from a crossbow." At other times in winter, when there was no ice, the Londoners met before dinner to watch boars fight and bulls baited by dogs, or they went off with hawk and hounds to enjoy the hunting which they had the right to " in Middlesex, Hertfordshire, all Chiltern, and in Kent to the river Cray "—a privilege which Sir Laurence Gomme attributes to the traditions of Roman days when London had its " territorium " like other Roman cities. Quieter, but perhaps still boisterous, was the amusement provided nearer home by " holy plays, representations of miracles wrought by confessors, or of torments showing forth the constancy of martyrs."

From the first London was a place of jollity and mirth. Her citizens were indeed serious men, building up the trade and prosperity of their city, marking out for themselves certain ideals in civic politics. But they could also relax and enjoy life with the merriest of all ages. To only one blot on city life does Fitz-Stephen confess besides the frequency of fires—" the immoderate drinking of fools."

CHAPTER III

THE GUILDS AND COMPANIES

By the end of the twelfth century London had become a factor of no small importance in national life. She had grown in size, thanks partly to the influx of foreigners not only from Normandy but also from Germany; she had established a system of communal government which, if not all she wanted, was at least effective; she had become instinct with life, a place of busy commerce and happy recreation. It was a civic aristocracy that had done all this, an aristocracy which had much in common with its feudal counterpart outside the walls. Far from being the " free city " of her earlier ambitions, London had become an essential part of national organization; her inhabitants were not a class apart, but closely connected with fellow subjects who were not citizens at all. So far as the civic aristocracy was concerned, it possessed a strong element of purely baronial origin. Those magnates who had houses in London were ranked by Fitz-Stephen as citizens, and William of Malmesbury tells us that many barons were enrolled in the " communio " of Stephen's days. Were not the citizens, as we have seen, classed with the barons on occasions of national importance? There was also much of the feudal organization of outside to be found within the walls. There were " sokes " or liberties, districts under the control of some lord, who claimed all jurisdiction both civil and criminal over their inhabitants. The Prior of the Holy Trinity had such a soke outside Aldgate; still more famous was that of Baynard's Castle, south of St.

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Paul's. Here the owner claimed the right not only to a seat by the Mayor at the Hustings in Guildhall, but also to sentence all those convicted of felony within his soke by having them tied to a stake placed in the Thames at low water, where they were to remain till two flows and two ebbs had made sure of their fate. So frequent were these liberties, within which the King's officers dared not venture, that the London Sheriffs were known to lay wait in byways to capture offenders as they emerged from these protecting bounds. On the other hand most of the chief citizens were holders of manors outside the walls; for instance, Henry Fitz-Eylwin was a feudal tenant of the crown in Hertfordshire, and the London citizen who held the soke of Baynard's Castle in the early thirteenth century was Robert Fitz-Walter, a baron by tenure and a man of considerable importance in the baronial councils. It was an empty sneer when Henry III spoke of the Londoners as " churls who call themselves barons."

This baronial spirit, which pervaded the ruling class in London, became most evident when King John found himself in arms against his revolted subjects. The mass of the inhabitants was probably quite uninterested in the quarrel. True, the poor must have felt the inconvenience of the Interdict under which the kingdom lay, but it was the wealthy and feudal element which experienced the real pressure of John's vagaries, and it was the feudalized class in London which attended the great meeting in St. Paul's at which Archbishop Langton produced the charter of Henry I as the basis of baronial demands. The importance of this civic aristocracy was recognized by the choice of one of its number to lead the " army of God and Holy Church " against the King. This was none other than Robert Fitz-Walter, who held the office of Castellain and Chief Bannerer of the city. His duty and privilege it was, when danger threatened, to ride to the gate of St. Paul's with nineteen knights, his banner and arms borne before him. There he was met by the Mayor, Aldermen, and Sheriffs,

fully armed, who presented him with the banner of the city which bore on a vermilion ground the figure of the city's patron saint St. Paul in gold with the feet and hands in silver, and with a drawn sword clasped in the right hand. Having mounted a charger presented to him for the occasion, the Castellain then led the way to the Priory of the Holy Trinity within Aldgate, where plans were concerted with the civic magistrates for the defence of the city.

It was a skilful move on the part of the revolted barons to choose as their leader the Castellain of London, but even then they had to use subtlety to secure possession of the city by climbing over the wall one day while the citizens were in church. Some chroniclers aver that they entered through Aldgate, though they own that this way was only possible owing to the Castellain's connexion with the neighbouring Priory of Holy Trinity. The whole movement, oligarchic as it was, can only have appealed to the narrow governing class of London, and when Magna Carta was conceded, though it confirmed the city's liberties, gave freedom to merchants and placed the Mayor and Fitz-Walter among the guardians of the compact, it gave nothing which was of advantage to the rank and file of the citizens. It was the wealthy merchant and feudal baron of London who might rejoice at the terms extracted from John. Still the aristocratic, or if we may so call it, the aldermanic party, did not have it all its own way in the city. It had captured the civic government, but it was not without opposition. Now that there was something definitely to fight for in the control of the civic organization, others came forward to claim their share. If we describe this opposition as the popular party, we must not be supposed to confer on it thereby any real democratic character. It consisted of what we might perhaps call the middle class, the citizens of some little wealth and considerable commercial and manufacturing activity, who were not numbered among the wealthy merchants or feudalized citizens. Their grievance was that, shut out from all share in governing the

city, they were oppressed and taxed for the benefit of the
few. It is a significant fact that these grievances were
voiced within five years of the concession of the Commune.

In 1196 a certain William Fitz-Osbert had come forward
as a popular leader. He is a shadowy figure, whose cha-
racteristics are varyingly described according to the politics
of the writer. Some speak of him as a wealthy citizen of
good family who championed the cause of his poorer fellows,
but a civic chronicler of the Aldermanic party described
him as " poor in degree and ill-favoured in shape," while
others also found a confirmation of their suspicions as to
his motives by his untidy appearance, which earned him
the nickname of " Longbeard." The language of his
enemies seems to suggest that he was a member of the
governing class, who by his championship of other interests
had earned the hatred and contempt of that class to which
he belonged. Already before 1196 he was known as a man
with a grievance, and an opponent of those who made
extravagant claims for the authority of the Mayor. Now
he led an attack on the alleged unjust assessment of taxation
made by the civic authorities, which bore heavily on the
poor and lightly on the rich. His fiery oratory resounded
through the streets and lanes of the city—the folkmoot
bell was rung, but nothing came of the agitation. The
Aldermanic party was too strong. Still Longbeard's follow-
ing was such that for a time he escaped the vengeance of
his enemies ; indeed, he boasted of royal support. But in
the end the Justiciar, who acted as the absent King's agent,
was persuaded to lend the forces of the Crown to crush the
demagogue. For some time he found sanctuary in Bow
Church, where he had laid in a stock of provisions, but the
officials piled faggots before the door and smoked out the
fugitive, who by the laws of sanctuary could not be dragged
from the church. Holy Week was at hand, and so as not
to violate the sanctity of the sacred season Fitz-Osbert
was quickly hung on the elms in Smithfield. Thus died
the first popular leader of London. His career seemed to

have ended in failure, but miracles began quickly to be performed by the gibbet on which he suffered, and the earth which his blood had stained was preserved to heal the sick, evidences that the cause still lived. The feudal aristocracy was threatened, but it was in a position to show considerable fight in defence of its privileges.

It was not for some time that the popular party recovered from the loss of its leader and originator, or found one worthy to take his place. But the struggle went on. We hear murmurs during the reign of John, which develop into an open struggle under his son. Henry III suffered from a chronic lack of money, and one of his devices for supplying his necessities was to secure complete control over London. He granted charters for money, levied tallages, " prises," and other exactions, just as though the city possessed no liberties and had never had the right to compound by annual payment for all dues. In a word, his object was to restore London to the position of a mere town upon his demesne. To do this he strove to play off one party in the city against the other, hoping that if he posed as the champion of the popular party he might get it to support his attacks on the privileges of the city which had been monopolized by the aristocratic burghers. This policy is well illustrated on three separate occasions. In 1239 a certain Simon Fitz-Mary, whose name suggests lowly origin, was elected Sheriff, but on the plea of past misappropriation of money the Aldermanic party obtained his dismissal. The King at once stepped in, and, to the delight of the popular party, insisted that Fitz-Mary should be restored. However just may have been this action, it was an unwarrantable interference with the liberties of the city, and paved the way for similar action seven years later, when a contest arose over the claims of a widow under the will of her late husband. Her appeal to the royal courts against the decision of the London magistrates was supported by Fitz-Mary, and seems to have assumed a party complexion. The governing class took its stand on the acknowledged right of the city

to administer her domestic laws and customs, the King gladly availed himself of the opportunity to get his foot inside the city's privileges, and again the popular party supported him against their internal enemies. After a long struggle Henry won a distinct victory, for he managed to compel the London authorities to defend their judgment in his courts, and though the case went in their favour, their point of privilege was lost. Finally, in 1258 Henry got another opportunity to interfere, or rather it looks suspiciously as if on this occasion he made his opportunity for himself. One of his Judges appeared in the Guildhall and declared that at Windsor there had been found a roll sealed with green wax, which told how the rich burghers were oppressing the citizens, assessing the tallages and other taxes in their own favour, and generally using the privileges of the city to their own advantage to the exclusion of the rank and file of the inhabitants. It was the cry of Fitz-Osbert raised once more, but on this occasion it was to be used for royal ends. The populace received with acclamation the King's suggestion that an inquiry into the allegations should be held by him. A regular campaign was carried on in the city, the King's representative addressing at least one open meeting at Paul's Cross, the place of public oratory in Cheap. Ultimately, with the full consent of the oppressed burghers, the King's judges passed sentence of deprivation on the accused Aldermen.

These proceedings betray the nature of the contest going on in London, and they show how the lesser citizens were at that moment ready to accept any aid against their alleged oppressors. When they met to acclaim the King's interference, a member of the Aldermanic party bitterly declared that they were a rabble, " many of them born without the city and many of servile condition," ready to welcome a royal attack on the city's liberties. Justified though this criticism may have been, their attitude is easily explained by the fact that the Aldermanic party had made these liberties useless to them. It was an unwise move perhaps,

but very natural, seeing that no real leader had arisen to show them the right way to fight their battles. Fitz-Mary's disinterestedness was not above suspicion, as he had risen from nothing to a position of such wealth that he was able to endow the Priory of St. Mary of Bethlehem outside Bishopsgate. But a greater leader, in the person of Thomas Fitz-Thomas, was at hand to organize the popular party on safer and wiser lines. A crisis had come in national as well as civic politics; the barons were arming against the King, who was now making overtures to the aristocratic party, promising to allow the citizens to plead their causes in their own courts and to forgive those who had incurred his wrath by upholding the privileges of the city. But his rapid change of front had little success, as the popular party was gaining strength under Fitz-Thomas, who became Mayor in 1262. He taught his followers that they should trust their own power of organization, not the outside assistance of the King, to the intense indignation of his civic opponents, who accused him of teaching the populace to call themselves the " Commons of the City " and of submitting all matters of importance to them, while practically ignoring the Aldermen. Thus we get an entire re-sorting of parties; the popular party abandoning their support of the King, and the aristocratic party becoming daily more inclined to go over to the King's side. A somewhat similar movement was going on in the country, for a portion of the baronage was returning to the King's party, while Simon de Montfort was organizing a more popular party of resistance. Inevitably the two parties of opposition in and out of London coalesced, and the known sympathy of Earl Simon helped Fitz-Thomas to break down aristocratic encroachments. It was the populace in London which gave such enthusiastic support to the King's enemies when war was declared, and a goodly band of armed men marched out to support De Montfort at Lewes, an action which one chronicler could only explain by the fact that the number of fools was always infinite. The London contingent suffered

severely for its enthusiasm, for it formed that left wing
which Edward " le Fitz-Roy " drove with such slaughter
from the field while the rest of his father's army was being
defeated. Great was the mourning in London over the
fallen, but also great the joy of victory, and when Fitz-
Thomas appeared to do homage to the captive King, he
allowed his triumph to betray itself in the words used to
his sovereign, " My Lord, so long as you will be unto us a
good lord we will be faithful and duteous unto you."
" Wondrous and unheard-of conduct," cried the Aldermanic
chronicler, who but lately had suffered at royal hands for
upholding civic privileges, but Fitz-Thomas was doing no
more than aristocratic Londoners had done in the past. A
popular leader, imbued with London patriotism, was but
reproducing the terms of the compact of the city with
Stephen.

When Simon's brief day of power ended at Evesham,
his London sympathizers had to suffer with the rest of his
followers. In vain they secured the re-election of Fitz-
Thomas as Mayor ; the leader, having gone to Windsor to
interview the King, was never heard of more. The city
was absolutely taken into the King's hands, her liberties
quashed, her lands seized. But the spirit of the people was
not quenched. Within a year during a riot the cry was
heard—" We will have no one for Mayor save only Thomas
Fitz-Thomas," to the great indignation of an Aldermanic
chronicler, Fitz-Thedmar, who condemned " such base
exclamations " as " did the fools of the vulgar classes give
utterance to." A period of humiliation had taught the
aristocrats some lessons, but little civic patriotism, for they
now welcomed the interference of the King, who, they
believed, had saved them from extermination. But when
the King was induced to allow the citizens to elect their
Mayor and Sheriffs once more, the popular party was able
to run its own candidates, and in 1272 to elect their new
leader, Walter Hervey, to the mayoralty. The validity
of his election was challenged, and angry crowds of mutually

hostile citizens made such a clamour in Westminster Hall, whither they had gone to argue the matter before the royal officials, that they had to be induced to retire for fear that the noise should disturb the last moments of the moribund King.   But so strong was the popular party that when Henry was indeed dead, those on whom the duty of proclaiming his son, Edward, King devolved, thought it wise to declare at the same time that Hervey was accepted Mayor.

It is evident that there must have been some considerable organization of the popular forces going on through these days.   From the disorderly rabble, who acclaimed Fitz-Osbert as their leader, there had grown a party strong enough to defy the civic aristocracy and place its nominee in the mayoral chair.   The Aldermanic party had hitherto relied on its strength in the wards, which owed their organization to their hereditary civic leaders, though in most towns it was the Merchant Guild which was the fighting organization of the oligarchy.   In London there are no traces of any such guild.   True, recent research has discovered the name in use on one occasion, but this does not point to the existence of any such body monopolizing the privileges and liberties of the city.   This may be due to the partial feudalization of the civic aristocracy in London, to the fact that it based its power just as much on territorial possessions as on the wealth won by trade.   Still it was undoubtedly other guild organizations that provided the strength of the popular party.   The origin of these craft guilds, as they were called, is not very definite.   They have no direct relationship to the earliest guilds of which we find traces in London history.   In pre-Conquest days there was the Frithgild, about which we know a good deal, but not enough to speak definitely of the exact position it held in civic life. The members of this fraternity met once a month to partake of a feast, the remains of which were given to the poor.   It had its religious side, which included the provision of Masses for the souls of departed brothers, but its main importance was that it formed a sort of insurance society against theft.

All members were to assist in the pursuit and capture of thieves; those who had horses, taking part in the chase, those who had not, doing the work of their fellows while they were absent on this police duty. Some have described this association as merely a religious and social society, but it was manifestly something more than this, for the punishment of death or banishment for those who broke faith, and the provision that anyone who slew a banished brother if he ventured to return was " to be 12d. the better for the deed," seem to be a little stringent for a mere brotherhood. The truth is that the Frithgild combined many of the attributes of a private association and a public authority in a most characteristically English fashion. That the Frithgild was the governing body of London in pre-Norman days is by no means proved, but its quasi-voluntary character combined with the religious side makes it the precursor of the later guild organizations of the city. After the Conquest it disappeared, but another guild organized in these early days lasted down to 1125. This was the Cnihten Guild which originated in Cnut's grant of a soke outside Aldgate, covering the district of East Smithfield, to thirteen knights, each of whom had to come off victoriously in three encounters, one above ground, one underground, and one on the water, and upon a day appointed tilt with all comers on the site of their soke. In those days the term " cniht," or knight, signified boy or servant, and it is clear that the word implied inferiority to the rank of Thane, but before the dissolution of the guild many of the Aldermanic party were enrolled as members. Possibly it was one of those quasi-voluntary societies which were given the public duty of protecting the town from attack; it certainly also had a religious side, and in the end the object of its members in surrendering their rights to the Holy Trinity Priory, Aldgate, was avowedly to preserve the religious element. Some have thought that this Cnihten Guild was at one time the governing body of the city, but for this there is little or no evidence. Both

Frithgild and Cnihten Guild had their religious and secular sides, and in this, if not in anything else, they were the ancestors of the later craft guilds.

When we come to speak of the origin of the craft guilds we still have to walk warily, for our knowledge is slight and the pitfalls are many. We have to realize that most, if not all, guilds had a religious as well as a secular side. Some, of course, such as the parochial guilds, were purely religious both in origin and intention, friendly societies intended for mutual help in things spiritual, their temporal activities being limited to the relief of brothers fallen on evil days, or the building of bridges, making of roads, and such like occupations, which were then all considered to be religious duties. Many believe that the religious idea was the foundation of the whole guild system which spread over England in the Middle Ages. Be this as it may, the craft guilds and the fraternities, or religious guilds, in London are hard to distinguish in their early days. The two earliest craft guilds of which we hear are the Weavers and the Bakers. The former secured the right to farm the levies made on their trade from Henry I, while the latter we find enjoying a like position in 1155, and the Fishmongers slowly gained certain privileges of jurisdiction over their business which point to the existence of an early guild. But the Fishmongers were merchants rather than crafts-men, and it is obvious from the large sums that they paid to recapture their privileges when lost that the Weavers numbered some of the wealthiest citizens among their members, and even then this guild was not representative of all those interested in the cloth industry within London. But side by side with these recognized societies there were growing other unauthorized associations—adulterine guilds, as they were called. Of these we get a list on the Pipe Roll of 1180, which records fines levied by the King on them for having come into existence without licence. Of the eighteen there mentioned only four are given names of trades, the Goldsmiths, the Paperers, the Clothworkers,

and the Butchers, while the rest are mostly merely described
by the name of their Alderman or head. One is given as
the Guild of Strangers, while no less than five are set down
as the Guild of Bridge. It seems probable that these were
not all, strictly speaking, craft guilds ; indeed the five
Guilds of Bridge may have been religious societies wherein
members were banded together to supply funds for the
religious purpose of repairing London Bridge, while clearly
the Guild of Strangers finds itself in quite an independent
category. The record gives the impression that these
societies varied considerably in wealth, for the fines run
from forty-five marks levied on the Goldsmiths to half a
mark (6s. 8d.) levied on " the Gild of which Odo Vigil is
Alderman." As the offence was the same in all cases the fines
must have been in proportion to wealth, and this at once
suggests that wealthy merchants as well as craftsmen had
their guilds. It may be that the Aldermanic party had
guilds, which they used to organize their fight to secure the
Commune, but if so it was not their organizations that came
into prominence during the thirteenth century, but those
of the craftsmen.

The distinction between the interests of the merchant and
the craftsman occurs in all the towns of Europe, for naturally
the former fixed his eyes on external trade, while the interest
of the latter was more local. Still the craftsman's guild
was by no means the purely democratic body that has
sometimes been described. It was an association of master
workmen, small men in their way doubtless, but still men
whose interests were those of the master rather than the
workman. The member of the craft guild was a man who
worked in his own shop with one, perhaps two apprentices
and a journeyman. He might be in a larger way of business,
but the large employer had not as yet appeared. On the
other hand, he would scarcely be a journeyman. Thus it
is impossible to find in the craft guilds the origin of later
trade unions, since the members did not represent labour
from the employees' point of view. They were rather the

first manifestation of the middle class, which was beginning to make itself felt in England, and as such they fought the battle of their class with the feudalized merchants of the Aldermanic party. In this fight it was their guild organization that gave them strength. Fitz-Thomas realized this fact, and did his utmost to nurse these nascent societies. He " had all the populace of the city summoned together, telling them that the men of each craft must make such provisions as should be to their own advantage, and he himself would have the same proclaimed throughout the city and strictly observed. Accordingly, after this, from day to day individuals of every craft of themselves made new statutes and provisions." The indignation of the aristocrats waxed eloquent over these " abominations," as they called them. They were organized, it was said, " solely for their own advantage and to the intolerable loss of all merchants coming to London and visiting the fairs of England, and the exceeding injury of all persons in the realm." These craft guilds were evidently regarded as a danger to the ruling class, both from the economic and the political point of view. The Aldermanic party was still strongly in sympathy with the foreign merchant ; indeed its ranks were recruited from them, and it looked askance at craftsmen regulating their own trade, as it was only too ready to do with regard to the merchandise in which it was interested. Again we see the clash between merchant and craftsman, between the men interested in foreign trade and the men who made things largely for home consumption, between the popular party which was national and the feudalized aristocratic party which was international.

But the tendency towards the growth of craft guilds could not be checked. Though with the fall of Fitz-Thomas and his patron Earl Simon their development was hindered, they came to the front once more when their leader, Walter Hervey, was elected Mayor. He it was who, following in the steps of his predecessor, granted a kind of civic incorporation to the guilds by affixing the city seal to the rules

drawn up by each association. But Aldermanic opposition was still strong. When Hervey's mayoral year was past, he was attacked on the subject of these charters, and the city rang with the disputations of the two parties. Both sides called public meetings, both sides canvassed, the Aldermen using the Guildhall as their committee-room, Hervey doing the same with the church of St. Peter's in Cheap. The result of the " wordy and abusive dispute " was that a great meeting was summoned to the Guildhall, where the charters were produced and expounded to the assembled populace by Aldermanic spokesmen. The whole question was fought out much on the lines of a modern election. Hervey declared that he was inspired " solely by love of God and motives of charity " ; he promised to support the poor against the rich, to keep down taxation and introduce economies into the administration of the city. His enemies cast doubt on his integrity, suggested personal advancement as the motive of his actions, and attacked his guild charters as " solely made for the benefit of the wealthy men of the trades to which they were granted, and to the loss and undoing of the poor men of those trades, and also to the loss and undoing of the other citizens and of the whole realm." It was the old cry against monopoly, the interest of the consumer raised against the interest of the maker, and when the charters were solemnly annulled with the consent of the populace it was ordered that men could follow their several crafts " at such hours and at such places as they should think proper, and carry their wares to sell within the city and without wherever they might think fit." But despite the Aldermen's victory it is obvious that this had only been accomplished by an appeal to the populace generally. Both parties in their struggle were appealing to this element in civic life—the unchartered masses, and, as was not unusual, these were inclined to side rather with the aristocrats than with the middle class which was nearer to them. Moreover, the plea of free trade was specious, and at first glance to the advantage of the majority.

Shortly after these events, the Aldermanic party was able to make another attack on the guilds. Under the pretext of welcoming Edward I when he first entered the city as King, Cheap was cleared of stalls, despite the protests of the craftsmen who believed they had a prescriptive right to their stands, and when Hervey offered to resist the edict, he was accused of many " presumptuous acts," deprived of his Aldermanic office and driven from public life.

It seemed once more as though the struggle of the guilds for power, the demands of the popular party, were to end in failure. The aristocrats were again in command of the city with such wealthy merchants as George de Rokesly and Henry le Waleys as their leaders. But the struggle still went on, and so serious did matters become that Edward I was compelled to " take the city into his hands," to substitute a warden of his own nomination for the Mayor, and to reorganize it generally. But when his strong hand was removed, when disorder threatened the country owing to the weak rule of Edward II, the crafts came once more to the front. In 1312 they were strong enough to petition the Mayor and Aldermen that " the statutes and ordinances regulating the various trades and handicrafts be duly enrolled on a register," and " forasmuch as the city ought always to be governed by the aid of men engaged in trades and handicrafts, and where it was anciently accustomed that no stranger, native or foreigner, whose position and character were unknown, should be admitted to the freedom of the city until the merchants and craftsmen, whose business he wished to enter, had previously certified the Mayor and Aldermen of his condition and trustworthiness, the whole Commonalty pray that such observance may be strictly kept for the future as regards the greater trades and the handicrafts." What was the immediate result of this petition we know not, but seven years later it was at last decreed that no man could obtain the freedom of London except either by becoming a member of a guild or by being elected thereto by the vote of the Commonalty. The crafts

had won the day, their long struggle was over. They now shared with the Aldermanic party the control of the civic constitution.

But the victory of the crafts was not a great popular success. On the one hand it is obvious that the Aldermanic party had shed much of its feudal characteristics. The wealthy merchant was now far more national and far less international than before ; he was now eager to attack immigrants, and his interests were far more commercial and far less territorial than they had hitherto been. He was still a magnate of the realm, proud of his influence on national politics, but he was less separatist in his tendencies. At the same time the craftsmen had lost some of their earlier characteristics. The increasing prosperity of the country had augmented their wealth ; there were signs that the old master workman was developing into something like an employer of labour on a considerable scale, and at the same time the stern dividing-line between merchandise and craft was becoming blurred. In a word, while the aristocratic trader was growing more mercantile in his outlook, the craftsman was becoming more aristocratic, and thus the way was paved for the evolution of the craft guilds into the great Livery Companies. The transition was effected during the fourteenth century, when most of the more important crafts became Companies by receiving charters of incorporation from the King. Thus during the reign of Edward III no less than seven such charters were granted to the Goldsmiths, the Tailors, the Girdlers, the Drapers, the Vintners, and the Fishmongers, and in addition some fifty to sixty "misteries," as they were called from the French *métiers*, had the right to make rules and regulations for their respective trades, and to take part in the election of the Mayor. At the beginning of the fifteenth century no less than one hundred and eleven crafts were exercised in London, and though all had not got the self-governing powers of a " mistery " from the city, there is no doubt that they possessed some species of guild organization. There are

some who cannot see their way to connect these aristocratic Livery Companies and Misteries with the more popular craft guilds of earlier days, largely because of the difference of their outlook, but the transition is explicable if we allow for the changes wrought by the passing of a hundred years, and the fact that a man in power always regards things with different eyes from those he used when he was in opposition. It is true that separate beginnings can be found for some Livery Companies, the crafts of which were exercised by earlier guilds. Thus the Grocers' Company originated in a meeting of twenty-two Pepperers of Soper Lane, who drew up new ordinances, appointed officers and adopted a livery, but this was more a process of reorganization than a new association without connexion with the Pepperers' Guild. It seems more than likely that the guild became the Company or the Mistery, as the case might be, that continuity was not lost, but that the party we have described as popular won its way to the front, and in its turn became as aristocratic as its late opponents, but in another and perhaps a better way.

Of the organization of the Company or Mistery we know far more than of the rules and regulations of the guilds. The governing body consisted, as a rule, of elected wardens, who during their term of office were responsible for the administration of the rules. They were given power of inspection, so as to guard against inferior work, and to facilitate this, night work was forbidden. No brother was to take advantage of another, undersell him or entice his apprentices or journeymen to leave him. Apprenticeship for seven years, or sometimes less, was the usual, but not universal, preliminary to becoming free of the Company, and as a rule no one not a member of the Company was allowed to employ the craft. The object was monopoly just as it had been in the case of the guilds, but now the opposition was silenced.

Thus amid strife and turmoil did the Guilds and Companies of London evolve. They stood, each in turn, for

great principles both political and economic, but the latter were on the whole by far the more important. By the fourteenth century London had embarked fully on her great commercial career. She was to pass through many vicissitudes ; her constitution was to suffer many rude shocks, but through all and above all it was her economic position which provided the life-blood for her veins, and from this time forward, for good or for ill, it was her Livery Companies which were to act as the indicators of her economic health.

CHAPTER IV

ECCLESIASTICAL LONDON

Though trade and commerce were the very life-blood of London's existence, they were not the solitary interests of the citizens, who were far from having a purely materialistic outlook on life. Probably to the stranger nearing London on his first visit in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, as he gazed down on the goal of his journey from the wooded heights of the Hampstead or Surrey hills, the most striking fact would be the large number of towers and belfries, evidences of the numerous churches to be found both within and without the walls, for besides the 100 parish churches in London and her suburbs according to the return of 1371, there was a host of monastic foundations. In many ways the city was the ecclesiastical capital of England, despite the claims of Canterbury ; certainly in it you might find a microcosm of the religious life of the nation. Bishops and Abbots from all over England were to be found there from time to time, some having their own houses in or round London, like the Archbishop of York in Whitehall, the Bishop of Ely, a portion of whose palace still survives off Holborn, or the Abbot of Bury, who had his " Inn " at St. Mary Axe. Both the two great bodies of priests were well represented in the city—the secular and the regular. The secular priests, being bound by no special vows and belonging to no order or separate organization within the Church, found their work in the parish churches, while many, without any special office, earned a precarious living as " mass priests," that is, by saying Masses for the repose of the souls

of departed persons for which they were paid. Some secular priests lived together in collegiate buildings attached to some church, and were known as secular canons. One of the oldest of London's ecclesiastical institutions was St. Martin's-le-Grand, where a body of secular canons lived, served the church, and treasured the privilege of sanctuary which pertained to their building. Many a time would a captive, passing by on his way to the prison at Newgate, escape from his captors and find safety in St. Martin's sanctuary. So bound up in the tradition of London was this, that the rights of sanctuary remained to the site long after the building had been turned to secular uses, being only abolished as late as the reign of James I. But far outweighing St. Martin's in importance as a home of secular canons was the great central ecclesiastical institution and building of London that lay hard by—the Cathedral of St. Paul, as much the centre of the secular clergy of England as was Canterbury of the regular clergy. This great mediæval church was one of the proudest of London's great buildings. There is possibly good reason to give some credence to the tradition that on this site once stood a temple dedicated to Diana, which in later days was converted to Christian uses, but the building as it stood in the fourteenth century dated back only to a time soon after the Norman Conquest. For something like two centuries did the Londoners watch the growth of their cathedral, and each stage was marked in the building itself by the style of architecture, which developed from the Early Norman of the nave to the glorious Decorated rose window which adorned the Lady Chapel of the east end. As each addition was made, it was recorded with loving pride by city chroniclers, and the whole building enabled the Londoner to boast that he possessed a cathedral equal to the finest in the land. Round the church there lay a wall which encompassed its liberties, and within this stood the Bishop's Palace on the north-west, and on the south the collegiate buildings and the Chapter House, the foundations of which can be seen peeping above the ground at the present day.

Near the eastern gate of this wall stood Paul's Cross, whence sermons were preached and proclamations of a more secular character were read, a monument which survived the Reformation, to be destroyed in Puritan days, and only rebuilt within the last few years.

Between the secular and regular priests a great gulf was fixed, the secular jealous of the pretensions of the regular, while the latter considered the former as totally inferior to them for not being bound by the severe rule they had to follow. There is no doubt that there were in London many secular priests of no very high moral character, most of them " mass priests " who had drifted to London after the Black Death, in the hope of making large incomes out of masses for the thousands who had died in that great epidemic, but the average parish priest was generally a worthy son of his Church, such as Chaucer describes among his other more worldly and dissolute ecclesiastical characters. Though London was the great centre of the secular clergy, the regular priests must have largely outnumbered them, for in and around the city there were monasteries of almost all the well-known Orders. Every religious revival during the Middle Ages was punctuated by the creation of some new order of monks, and each in turn founded a house in or around London. The oldest Order of all was that of the Benedictines, and they naturally found a home in the oldest monastery of the London district at Westminster. The most ancient portion of the Abbey Church, as it now stands, dates from the time of Edward the Confessor, but the main building owes its existence to the restoration undertaken by Henry III, while the eastern portion was not added till the close of the Middle Ages. The monks of Westminster were naturally brought into close contact with the King, whose palace lay hard by and of which Westminster Hall still survives. Portions of their church were used as the royal treasury, and in the recently re-opened Chapel of the Pyx were stored the yield of the taxes, the regalia, and all sorts of treasure. Monasteries, and

particularly those of London, were frequently used for the storing of precious articles during the Middle Ages, and they were a great temptation to the burglars of the day, Westminster being no exception, for the royal treasury was boldly robbed during the reign of Edward I. Within the city itself the Benedictines were represented by a house of nuns attached to the church of St. Helen's, Bishopsgate. Originally a parish church, this edifice had been adapted to monastic purposes by the building of a nun's choir side by side with the parochial portion, the domestic buildings lying to the north of the site. The nuns of St. Helen's were evidently something of a responsibility to their visitor, the Dean of St. Paul's, who in the fifteenth century drew up a long list of rules which forbade too much intercourse with the outside world, deprecated games, except on days of high festival, limited the number of dogs kept by the Abbess, and frowned on familiarities with secular persons. The religious revival of the tenth century was represented by the Order of Cluny, which instituted a rule far more strict than, though founded on, that of the Benedictines. Soon after the Conquest a house of this Order was founded at Bermondsey, where it flourished down to the Reformation, being promoted from a Priory to an Abbey in 1390. It also possessed branches, or cells as they were called, in Cripplegate, Aldersgate, and Holborn, the site of the last being to-day marked by the church of St. Andrew's. Hardly a stone of Bermondsey Abbey can still be seen above ground at the present day, though the foundations are often encountered by modern excavators, and such names as Grange Walk keep alive the memory of the monastic farm.

The revival of the eleventh century gave birth to the two great Orders of the Carthusians and the Cistercians, founded between 1090 and 1100. Both were even more strict than Cluny, the Carthusians particularly so; both sought for their homes deserted places, and so their arrival in the London district was considerably delayed. It was not till 1350 that Cistercian nuns were established near

Tower Hill in the Abbey of St. Mary Graces or Eastminster by Edward III, as a thankoffering, it is said, for deliverance from a storm at sea. The Carthusians came some twenty years later, being given a site by Bishop Northburgh and receiving liberal support from Sir Walter Manny, the Hainault knight who came over in the train of Edward III's queen. The place had been used as a burying-ground during the days of the Black Death, and already a little chapel stood there, round which sprang up a stately group of buildings, parts of which fortunately still stand. A strictly enclosed order, the Carthusians became famous for their learning, and many a Londoner, distraught by the complications of the world, sought temporary relief and wise counsel in the guest-chambers of this monastery, ever open to those in need of spiritual comfort. In the very last days of its existence it gave shelter for such purposes to young Thomas More, who doubted whether his vocation lay in the world or behind the shelter of monastic walls.

Hitherto the main tendency had been towards restricting the energies of the monks within the four walls of their monastery, but all along there had also been a movement towards bringing the secular canons who went out into the world into the fold of the regular clergy, and thus establishing an Order of monks who, living by rule and bound by vows, yet were not cloistered in the strict sense of the word. This movement was represented by the Order known as the Austin Canons or Canons Regular, the existence of which was an answer to the criticism of selfishness brought against the principle of monasticism. They were divided into numerous "congregations," as they were termed, most famous of which was that of the Premonstratensians, dating from 1120, but regular canons had been established in London long before this date. Three great houses of this Order had been founded in the London district within ten years of the beginning of the twelfth century. The Priory of the Holy Trinity, Aldgate, otherwise known as Christchurch, owed its existence to the generosity of Maud, wife

of Henry I. The Priory of St. Mary Overie, now South-
wark Cathedral, and once a home of nuns, was refounded
for the Austin canons by two Norman knights in 1106,
while most famous of all was St. Bartholomew's, Smithfield,
a portion of which still stands as one of the finest examples
of Norman architecture that London possesses. Fact and
legend are picturesquely interwoven in the story of this
foundation. Rahere, a dissolute member of Henry's court,
being led to repentance by a severe illness in Rome, was
bidden by St. Bartholomew in a vision to found a house in
honour of his name, and having secured a site in Smithfield
from the King, he set to work to build the chancel of the
church which we still see to-day. To the south rose the
cloister, domestic buildings, and hospital, while a later age
added the nave of the church, all of which have long since
been destroyed. From the first the canons regular of
St. Bartholomew's were commissioned to heal the sick, and
very soon they made their hospital famous. From then till
now St. Bartholomew's Hospital has continued its activities,
with one short break after the dissolution of the monasteries
before the modern hospital was reconstituted on the ruins
of the old monastic establishment. Hospital work indeed
was a very usual employment for canons regular, though
it must be remembered that the mediæval spital was often
more an almshouse than a hospital in the modern sense of
the word. This is to some extent true, for instance, of St.
Mary's Spital founded at the end of the twelfth century out-
side Bishopsgate, and at its dissolution possessed of " one
hundred and eighty beds, well furnished for receipt of the
poor," as Stow tells us. Now Spital Square marks the
position of some of the buildings, and recently number 32
has been identified as occupying the site of the Spital Cross,
from which sermons were preached. But the majority of
London hospitals were real homes for the sick, and all of
them, like St. Mary's Spital, were in the hands of canons
regular. There was the Hospital of St. Mary of Bethlehem,
founded by Simon Fitz-Mary in 1246, and from the first

probably a home for demented persons, more familiar to us on its modern site in Lambeth and under the corrupted title of Bedlam. In Elsing Spital there was provision for 100 blind men after its re-foundation in 1329, for before this it had been a nunnery ; at St. Thomas's in Southwark, and St. James's, far out in the fields westward (where St. James's Palace now stands), lepers were tended ; indeed the hospital accommodation of London was adequate even to its size, though the more infectious cases, such as leprosy, were kept outside the walls. To some extent also the regular canons took an interest in education ; at least in the case of their house of St. Thomas Acon, founded in memory of St. Thomas Becket, they kept a school, which now has its descendant in the Mercers School, as the Mercers obtained the site at the dissolution and maintained the tradition.

Connected to a certain extent with the Austin canons by the fact that they were vowed but not confined to the monasteries, were the great Crusading Orders of knightly monks. Of these two had branches in England with central depots in London—the Hospitallers and the Templars. Both took their origin early in the twelfth century ; both were sworn to do service in the Holy Land besides the usual triple monastic vow of poverty, chastity, and obedience ; both established houses in London about the same time, and their churches there were consecrated in the same year. Both have left survivals of their architecture—in the case of the Templars their round church, in the case of the Hospitallers part of the chancel of their church and their entrance gateway. The Knights of the Temple, however, did not continue long into the fourteenth century, for in the reign of Edward II the Order was suppressed, and their property was conferred on the Hospitallers, though much of it passed into other hands. The Temple precincts were very soon leased to the lawyers, who remained in occupation till the dissolution of the monasteries, when they obtained the freehold together with certain privileges and immunities still enjoyed at the present day. On the other hand the

Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, as the Hospitallers were more properly called, continued to occupy their site in Clerkenwell down to the Reformation, and in recent years there has been a revival of the " English language " of the Order, which has its headquarters in the old gateway, built by the old Knights quite at the end of their tenure in 1504.

The last great religious revival of the Middle Ages came in the thirteenth century, and was marked by the rise of the Friars, notably the two great Orders of Dominicans and Franciscans. They carried yet further the idea of combining service to their fellow men with the life of the cloister, the former being designed by their founder to be evangelical preachers—indeed they were generally known as the Friars Preachers—the latter being designed for social work among the outcast and the poor. Both accepted at the outset the most literal interpretation of the doctrine of apostolic poverty, though both were inevitably to fall away from this ideal, when their growing numbers demanded an elaborate and world-wide organization. The Dominicans were the first of these two Orders to arrive in London. From 1221 onwards they had a home in Holborn, but in 1226 they moved into the city, being established at the angle where the River Fleet met the Thames, hard by Barnard's Castle, the old Liberty of Fitz-Walter. There a stately monastery was built, and the great hall became a favourite meeting-place for Parliament, when, despite the protests of the citizens, such assemblies were held within the walls. It was with the Dominicans in Holborn that the Franciscan friars lodged when they first came to London, but they soon possessed a house of their own on Cornhill, only to leave it within a year for a new home near Newgate, where they slowly built their extensive but by no means ornate Friary. Christ Church, Newgate Street, still marks the site of their church, and till lately their domestic buildings were partly incorporated in Christ's Hospital School, before they were pulled down to make way for the new General Post Office. The Franciscans, or Grey Friars, as they were called from

their habit, did much towards relieving the crying distress of the very poor who congregated in the shambles at their gates, whilst the Dominicans or Black Friars, so named from the black robe they wore out of doors, provided the preachers who from Paul's Cross or elsewhere called on the people to repent. Closely connected with the Franciscans in ideals were the nuns known as poor Clares or Minoresses, founded by St. Clare on the lines of the Order started by her friend and counsellor, St. Francis. These too secured a London home towards the end of the thirteenth century just outside Aldgate on the south, and to this day the street which runs from Aldgate to the Tower takes its name from those sisters, being known in its corrupted form as the Minories.

Besides the great Orders there were two less important bodies of friars, who nevertheless secured incorporation in the Four Orders of Friars. The Friars of Mount Carmel, otherwise known as Carmelites or White Friars, settled between the Temple and the Black Friars on the banks of the Thames, and the right of sanctuary which they possessed made their district one of the most disturbed in London, so much so that they had to appeal to Edward III to abate the nuisance. Strangely enough this tradition remained long after the White Friars had been swept away in the general dissolution of the monasteries, and the spot became the famous, or rather infamous, Alsatia—that home of thieves and cut-throats in the eighteenth century. The Austin Friars, who sprang into existence about the middle of the thirteenth century, also found their way to London, and in 1283 were established near Broad Street, where the remains of their church still stand as the home of a Dutch Protestant congregation in London, who have held it since 1550. Even then the full story of the friars in London has not been told, for two other minor Orders, not fully recognized and of which little is known, were to be found within the city. In 1257 the Friars of the Sack, or Servites, who were of recent creation, appeared in London, and

ultimately secured the patronage of Eleanor, Queen of Edward I, and a home in Lothbury. Still more obscure were the Crutched Friars, who really approximated more to the Austin Canons, as they were not mendicants. They settled in the parish of St. Olave's in 1298, but did not hold any important position in either the social or religious life of the city. The great feature common to all these friars was that their appeal was to the great mass of the people. Popular in the best sense of the word, they impressed the individuality of their respective Orders on the city where they dwelt, and perhaps it is more than a coincidence that they alone of the religious houses of London have left their impress on the names of the city, long after they had been driven forth and their homes in most cases reduced to ashes. The Black Friars were long recalled in the name of their district, and to this day a bridge bears their name ; Whitefriars and Carmelite are still to be found as names between Bridge Street and the Temple. Both Austin Friars and Crutched Friars are the names of modern streets.

Thus by the end of the thirteenth century London was a veritable home of clergy, both regular and secular, and probably a third of the land within the city liberties was in the occupation of the Church. But this was not regarded with favour on all sides. Each monastic Order had its day and then began to fall away from the high ideals of its origin, and when the friars in turn began to do this, there arose no new Order to take their place ; indeed the creation of new Orders had been expressly forbidden by ecclesiastical ordinance. This partly explains why the next religious revival in England, and in London in particular, took a line of hostility to the Church, or rather to its existing organization. There is no doubt that public opinion in London was not on the whole favourable to the priest in the later fourteenth century. Londoners of several types have left on record their feelings in this direction. The caustic satire of Chaucer, who was a Londoner by adoption whatever his place of origin, was made to play on the friar and to a less

extent on the monk; John Gower, a Londoner and probably a merchant as well as a poet, whose tomb can be seen in Southwark Cathedral, had no good word to say for any clerical type or rank, while the author of " The Vision of Piers Plowman " had his tale to tell of careless or dissolute priests, and he too knew his London as one who had lived there, though he may have seen his vision on the Malvern Hills.   Still the attitude of the average Londoner towards the distinguished leader of the great campaign against materialism in the Church and ecclesiastical wealth is at first hard to understand.   John Wycliffe, despite his single-minded earnestness in the cause of true religion, had the mis-fortune, perhaps we may even say the folly, to mix up his crusade with politics, and to accept the patronage of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, who, while quite orthodox and in no sense anti-clerical, had his own quarrel with certain high-placed clerics who were also ministers of the crown. Now a strong body of Londoners had great reason to dislike John of Gaunt, who had mixed in civic politics and par-ticularly in a quarrel between the victualling and non-victualling guilds which at the time divided the city into two camps.   By his enemies he was even credited with the intention of sequestrating the city's liberties.   When, there-fore, Courtenay, Bishop of London, summoned Wycliffe to answer for some of his opinions in St. Paul's, and the accused appeared with four friars briefed to support him by John of Gaunt, and a band of armed men provided by the same person, it was natural that the enemies of the Duke should champion the Bishop when they saw him threatened by Lancaster.   It was largely political, not religious, views which this action represented, a fact which is made the more patent when a few years later these same Londoners broke up a meeting at Lambeth before which Wycliffe had been arraigned, though on this occasion it was to protect and not to attack the accused Doctor, who was now no longer under Lancaster's patronage.

Whatever the attitude towards Wycliffe himself, there is

not wanting evidence that the movement which he started gained many adherents in the city. All through the reign of Richard II the Lollards, as the followers of Wycliffe were called, could boast of considerable support from the Londoners. One of their chief complaints was the wealth of the clergy, and when John de Northampton—a friend and follower of Lancaster, it may be noted—was Mayor, he succeeded in cutting down the fees payable to priests in the city. Baptism was to cost no more than four pence, the marriage fee was to be reduced to half a mark (6s. 8d.), and 3s. 4d. was to secure a mass for the repose of a defunct person. Further, when the hounds of disorder broke loose in 1381, there was many a Londoner who helped in the pillaging of ecclesiastical property, and later in the reign more than a few citizens were implicated, according to the chroniclers, in the demands for reform boldly brought forward in Parliament, though quickly quashed by the authorities. When in 1399 the Lancastrians seized the throne and inaugurated an era of persecution for heretics, some Londoners were to be found among the victims. But the last great stand was when at the accession of Henry V Sir John Old-castle appeared at the head of those who attacked both the Church and the dynasty. There is no doubt that the real reason for the undercurrent of opposition to the clergy found in London was largely due to a feeling that they were not living up to their high pretensions. The Lollards made great play with clerical corruption, and their assertions are substantiated by a return of those convicted of immoral practices in the city between 1401 and 1439, for no less than forty-four from among seventy convictions were those of clerks. Sir John was warmly supported by the mercantile classes and by a strong minority of Londoners. When he fled from justice, it was Londoners who covered his escape and kept him concealed in the city; when he hatched his plot against Henry V it was in London alehouses that his confederates met, and it was in St. Giles's parish, just outside the walls, that he planned to muster his forces. The project

failed miserably, but not before it was evident that many sympathized with the movement, and this for reasons of religion and not of politics. Lollardy was a beaten cause, but there were still a few within the city who continued to support it. Every now and again throughout the fifteenth century the city chroniclers have to record the burning of some London heretic who was ready to lay down his life for his opinions.

A new line of thought had appeared in the city. The old order was slowly breaking up. It was natural that a great ecclesiastical centre like London should feel the full force of any religious movement, but it is too much to say that there was any determined desire for reform among the main body of citizens. Almost insensibly the conditions of mediæval life were changing, and this change was to be traced not only in the religious sphere but also in the social and economic organization of the city.

CHAPTER V

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL UPHEAVAL

IF it is ever safe to take any event as a line dividing two epochs in history, this can be done with regard to the Black Death both in London and in English History generally. Not that it was the sole creator of new problems, but it came at a time when the mediæval spirit was wearing itself out, when co-operation was beginning to yield to new individualistic ideas, when the mysticism of the past was giving place to a more materialistic outlook. To London, as to England generally, the great pestilence came with terrible and overwhelming suddenness. True, the heralds of the storm might have been descried had there been eyes to see them. All through 1347 the pestilence had been working northwards through Europe, having come by the trade-routes from the East. About August 1348 it first appeared in England at Melcombe Regis in Dorset, and by November it was raging in London. There was little equipment to resist the advance of any contagious disease. Though London was undoubtedly not the filthy place which some would describe it in the Middle Ages, and though the connexion between cleanliness and health was to a certain extent realized, the ordinances of those in authority do not seem always to have been carried out. There were prohibitions against the keeping of swine in the streets, against the leaving of offal in the public highway, and even against tipping dirty water out of the windows of the houses into the " Kennel," which carried off all superfluous fluids down the sides of the

streets. Men were ordered to keep the space before their doors clean, and to refrain from fulfilling their obligations by dumping their refuse in front of their neighbours' houses. Moreover, the civic authorities provided twelve carts, each with two horses, to carry off refuse, and each ward elected four men to see that the " Rakyers " or scavengers did their work. Still, like many careful provisions, these precautions were not really carried out, a situation not confined to this or any other age. In 1309 new ordinances had to be issued, because the streets were as full of filth as ever, and in 1358 Bishopsgate and Aldgate had to be specially cleaned for the passage of the funeral cortège of Isabella, widow of Edward II, as it passed to her last resting-place at the Grey Friars. This, though after the first appearance of the Black Death, is none the less indicative of the state of the streets about that time, though it seems to suggest that the city authorities welcomed an excuse to get some necessary cleansing done, since it was quite impossible for the procession to pass through both Aldgate and Bishopsgate on the same journey. Thus there must have been some assistance to an infectious disease in the sanitary conditions of the city, though it must be noticed that it was not only among the poorer and more crowded portions of the London district that the Black Death found its victims, for the Archbishop of Canterbury, in proud isolation at Lambeth, and many of the wealthier citizens, such as the Wardens of the Companies, succumbed.

The medical men of the day would not be of great assistance in combating the Plague. Here, again, there was some attempt to secure efficiency. No doctor could practise in London unless he was duly certified, and then, as now, he might have to run the gauntlet of an inquest on his defunct patient. Only a few years before the Black Death one practitioner had been gravely censured by a coroner's jury for not having called in another opinion to assist him in his treatment. But nothing could guard against the general ignorance of matters medical, and, if we are to

believe Chaucer, the selfishness of the average doctor led him to treat only those who could pay high fees. Sometimes these fourteenth-century doctors knew things which a much later age refused to believe, but, as a rule, the cures savoured more of the magician or the modern quack than of the physician. Such prescriptions as we know of were evidently designed more to avert the machinations of the Evil One than to combat the disease on its own ground. Such being the case, it is no wonder that the Black Death struck terror into the hearts of the Londoners, that the sight of men dead who a few hours before had been in perfect health— for in some cases death followed hard on infection—scared men till they could hardly believe themselves to be alive. The shock drove some to the consolations of religion and even to a species of religious mania, but the hard-headed Londoner was not affected in this way. When the Flagellants crossed from Flanders and processed naked to the waist through the streets, each flogging the man in front and calling the on-lookers to repent, few, if any, were impelled to join this manifestation of remorse. More often than not terror produced a tendency towards materialism, a realization that life was short and only to be enjoyed for a brief period, and in the neighbourhood, if not in the city itself, riotous and dissolute conduct, even in sacred precincts, became very common, notably at Barking, where the Bishop had to interfere. When the plague was stayed, probably half the citizens lay dead. We cannot accept with Stow the 50,000 buried in one year in the Spital croft on which the Charterhouse was later founded, but the mortality was probably as great in London as elsewhere, if not greater, and it gave a serious check to the prosperity of the city. Eight years later the authorities complained that since the pestilence one-third of the city had lain desolate, and that her economic position was still suffering from the effects. Indeed, apart from the deaths, many had fled from the city, and the Sheriffs had been upbraided by the King for their remissness in not executing his orders, that none but ambas-

sadors and known merchants, travelling on business, should
be allowed to leave the country.

Throughout England the Black Death helped to accentuate
an economic crisis, which assumed a different aspect in
town and country.   The common factor was the question
of wages.   For some time there had been signs of changing
conditions, seen in the tendency of wages to rise, and after
the pestilence this became more than a mere tendency.
Labour, owing to its scarcity, was able to demand far higher
remuneration, and the governing classes at once had recourse
to the traditional method of solving such a problem by
regulation.   Almost at once a royal ordinance, which later
by the assent of Parliament became a statute, decreed that
men and women were neither to pay nor to demand higher
wages than had been current before the epidemic, that all who
were offered work at the legal rate of pay were to take it,
and that the prices of foodstuffs were to remain at the
same level.   The Londoners showed their acceptance of
this solution of the question by anticipating it by a local
regulation of wages, and at once a struggle ensued between
those who paid and those who earned, between the employer
and the employed.   It was only in London, and perhaps
one or two other big towns, that the full cleavage between
employer and employed appeared, because the two classes
were only to be found in places which had definitely begun
to emerge from the co-operative organization characteristic
of the Middle Ages.   In the past the apprentice had looked
forward with confidence to the day when he would become a
master workman and a full member of the guild pertaining
to his own particular craft, but now there was arising in
London a regular class of " yeomen " or " valets," artisans
who, having passed through their indentures, were fully
qualified workmen, but would have to be content to work
for masters for the rest of their lives, and though members
of the guild, could never aspire to control its policy.   These
men very naturally resented their lot far more now when
they realized that the purchasing power of their labour was

to be restricted by those who employed them, and they began to organize against the enforcement of the scale wage. It is in London, therefore, that we get the first incipient signs of trade unionism in the " covies " of journeymen, as they were called. From this time forward we hear of attempts on the part of the employed—more frequent when the fifteenth century is reached—to organize against their employers for the purpose of securing a better wage. Both the saddlers and the cordwainers made the attempt; the journeymen tailors tried to organize a little co-operative system of their own and work for themselves in a house they took for the purpose, but in every case the masters and wardens of the Companies managed to quash the movement. Nevertheless the workers by persistent action did achieve something, and in 1378 the London civic government complained that wages had advanced considerably, though the prices of commodities remained fairly stationary. Still it was by struggles and evasions that this was achieved, which only helped to enhance the growing friction between class and class. Already there were murmurs because in 1346 the civic franchise had been restricted to men of means, and when in 1380 a new poll tax was enforced, it was felt to be a definite attempt by the governing classes to tax the artisan class more heavily. Indeed, a candid chronicler acknowledges this intention. Poll taxes there had been in the past, but they had been graduated, while this one was 1s. per head of the population, though permission was given to graduate it by local arrangement from £1 to 4d., where this was possible. The resentment against this measure was universal, and we have good evidence that in London this was shown by a systematic falsification of the returns. Already the city was seething with discontent, and, in addition, there were political rivalries which played into the hands of those who had economic wrongs to avenge. The struggle between the victualling and non-victualling guilds on the question of free trade was still progressing, and a large section of the citizens, both rich and poor, had con-

ceived a greater hatred than ever for the Duke of Lancaster. He was held responsible for the inefficient prosecution of the war against France, and his hatred of the citizens was common knowledge, for had he not some two years before obtained the calling of a Parliament at Gloucester, so as to be free from the interference of " the ribalds of London " ? Thus when the rebellion broke out in 1381, and armed bands began to march on London, they might well hope to find no little sympathy within its walls.

On June 12 the rebel forces arrived round London—the men of Kent under Wat Tyler at Blackheath, and the men of Essex under more obscure leaders, of whom a Londoner, Thomas Farringdon, was one, at Mile End. The Government, taken by surprise, took counsel in the Tower, but could not decide on any course of action.   In the city Mayor Walworth was a strong man, but he was hampered by the divisions of his followers, since there were several aldermen who thought that by making common cause with the rebels they might assist their own plans. This became the more apparent when the Guildhall authorities sent a feeble message to Tyler that he had better go home, and entrusted it to three aldermen, one of whom fraternized with the insurgents and managed to bring back with him three agitators, who were to stir up the citizens to revolt. On the following day the terrified Council in the Tower decided on equally futile action. The youthful king was rowed over to the southern shore of the river near Greenwich, with the idea that an interview with him would appease all discontent, but the moment was unfortunately chosen, for only that morning John Ball—the mad priest of Kent, as he was called—had preached one of his well-known apocalyptic sermons on the text :

> *Whan Adam dalf, and Eve span,*
> *Wo was thenne a gentilman ?*

A fierce class hatred was sweeping over the mob, but when the King drew near, strangely enough it was not social and

economic so much as political grievances which were voiced.
Richard himself was received with cheers, coupled with a
demand for the heads of the leaders of the Government—
Lancaster, Archbishop Sudbury, the Chancellor, and Sir
Robert Hales, the Treasurer. As Sudbury was present in
the boat, it is not surprising that the King was not allowed
to land, but was taken back to the Tower. Thus all the
forces of order seemed paralysed, and no one was able to
prevent Alderman Sibley from betraying the Bridge Gate to
the insurgents. London was in the hands of the mob.
At first good order was kept by Tyler, who was now at the
head of a considerable force, since the Essex men poured in
from the east, and a host of the discontented in London
joined him gladly. Rushing through the city, the rebels
burst out of Ludgate, and made straight for Lancaster's
Palace at the Savoy, situated in the Strand. The whole
building was soon gutted by fire, and it was well for its owner
that he was far away on the borders of Scotland. Thence
the flood of furious humanity swept back towards the city,
wrecking the Temple as it passed, for was not this the home
of the lawyers, always hated in the Middle Ages, but never
more so than at this time, when they represented the bonds
which bound the labourer to the soil and the artisan to his
meagre wage ? Rushing ever onwards, the mob next attacked
the Priory of the Hospitallers, for the hated Treasurer, Hales,
was Grand Master of the Order. Finally, after the slaughter
of a few Flemings, who suffered for the dislike felt by the
London workmen for the foreign immigrant who undercut
his wares, and the throwing open of the Fleet and Newgate
prisons, the insurgents bivouacked on and around Tower Hill,
where their cries could be heard by the terrified occupants
of the Tower.

So far nothing had been done to stem the flood of rage
let loose. On the whole the rebels had not indulged in
indiscriminate excesses, and at least one of their number
had been executed by the leaders for pillaging at the Savoy.
In vain did Walworth try to put heart into the Council within

the Tower by promising the support of several thousand London loyalists, if a determined sally were made. With poor diplomacy it was decided to arrange a conference between the King and the rebels on the following day at Mile End, in the hope that Sudbury and Hales would be able to escape while their enemies were otherwise engaged. Accordingly Richard rode out on the 14th to the conference, where he was met with a series of demands. Serfdom and all feudal services were to be abolished, villeins becoming free tenants and paying fourpence an acre for their holdings, market privileges and all other restrictions on buying and selling were to cease, the rebels were to receive a free pardon and all " traitors " were to be executed. All this was freely granted save the last demand, but the rebels had taken care to assure themselves with regard to their enemies. Tyler had slipped away from the conference, and having joined the guards he had set outside the Tower, managed to get access to the fortress, with the connivance, it would seem, of the Royalist troops, and by the time the King returned from Mile End the heads of Sudbury, Hales, and three others were being paraded on pikes through the London streets.

A miserable night was spent by the royal party in the " Queen's Wardrobe," a house situated near to St. Paul's, where the King was joined by such Councillors as survived and his mother, the Princess of Wales, who had fainted in the Tower when one of Tyler's followers showed a desire to embrace her. The hounds of disorder were now indeed let loose. The more honest portion of the insurgents had returned home, satisfied with the royal promises ; only the extremists and the unprincipled remained, with Tyler at their head. Flemings were slaughtered by the hundred, all lawyers, tax-collectors, and friends of John of Gaunt were killed at sight, and on the following morning the Warden of the Marshalsea prison in Southwark was dragged out of Westminster and butchered. Still all the trembling Council could suggest was another interview, which took place on

Saturday the 15th. Richard was accompanied by a force of two hundred men, and took up a position on the east side of Smithfield, just outside St. Bartholomew's Priory. To him came Tyler with fresh demands. No one was to be outlawed, the estates of the Church were to be confiscated, and all religious orders were to be abolished save the friars. Only one bishop was to survive this drastic purge of ecclesiasticism, and all men were to be equal save the King. Again Richard was all compliance; everything should be granted, saving his royal rights, but this hardly solved the difficulty any more than it had done the day before. Tyler, it would seem, wanted resistance, and the opportunity for a quarrel arose when a Kentish man in the King's following cried out that he recognized the rebel leader as a well-known robber from his native county. With frenzied wrath Tyler rode at his traducer, to be stopped by the Mayor, who received the rebel's sword on his coat of mail, and turning, cut his assailant down. There was a moment of tense expectation. Would the insurgents rush forward to avenge their leader, who had been promptly run through the body as he lay on the ground? With a coolness such as he never again showed at a crisis, Richard rode forward declaring himself the rebels' new leader, and for a time the situation was saved. Walworth at last had got his opportunity. Slipping back into the city, he soon had mustered a considerable force of law-abiding citizens, who, whatever their grievances, saw that now, if something were not done, they would be at the mercy of an undiscriminating mob. The traitor Alderman, Sibley, tried to prevent the Mayor's muster, but soon a large force rushed out of the city, to find the King holding converse with John Ball and his friends at Clerkenwell. The rebels were quickly surrounded, and disorganized and disheartened now that the genius who had led them was dead, they dispersed or submitted to arrest. The rebellion was over.

At his accession Richard had been called " the Londoners' King," because many considered that only the strenuous

opposition of the citizens to Lancaster had prevented him from usurping the throne. Now the appellation was doubly true, for it had been the loyal Londoners, and particularly their Mayor, who had saved the situation. Walworth, John Sandwich, who had given Tyler his *coup de grâce*, and Philpot, a famous ex-mayor, were knighted on the spot. Later, legend has added that the King then and there gave licence for the mayoral title to be prefixed by the word Lord, and that the dagger, now seen in the city coat of arms, was included shortly after this to commemorate the slaying of Tyler by the city's chief officer. Both of these statements are quite unfounded. The evolution of Mayor into Lord Mayor was gradual and not by creation, the very first occasion when the title is found being in two documents of the year 1486, and its general use cannot be ascribed to a period anterior to 1534 or 1535. The dagger in the coat of arms is no dagger at all, but the sword of St. Paul, the patron saint of the city. But though the rebellion of 1381 left no such dramatic memorial on the annals of the city, it had its influence on the course of civic history during the next few years. From the social and economic point of view the effect was negligible. A special commission of Londoners was appointed to stamp out all signs of sedition in this quarter, and there was no difficulty in doing so. Not a single murmur was allowed to reach the outer world when the promises made by the King to the insurgents were recalled, and, so far as we know, there was no alteration in the relations of employer and employed, for the same old grievances appear again and again in later history. But from the political point of view the aftermath of the rebellion continued throughout the reign, and the city was the scene of party strife for many a long year. The whole struggle was mixed up with the political quarrels in the nation at large, and not for the first time a King strove to win the support of London as a weapon against his enemies.

From the civic point of view the issue was the old question of free trade, the combatants being the victualling guilds

on one side, now led by Nicholas Brembre, and the non-victualling guilds led by John de Northampton. The latter was a firm friend of Lancaster, who had all along championed this faction in the city, while Brembre became the ally of the King, who was more and more estranged from his uncle, and having arrived at years of discretion was striving to build up a Court party to support his efforts to assert himself. Richard interfered in the Mayoral elections, and to such good effect did he work that Brembre was returned as Mayor, and as a result every effort was made to silence Northampton. The latter organized his party on quite modern lines by a system of public meetings directed by a caucus which carried on its work at the tavern of " John Willingham in the Bowe," but it ended in his arrest for riot and condemnation to prison in 1383. Though the London Common Council believed that Northampton was the cause of all dissensions in the city, Brembre was fiercely opposed on seeking re-election, and it was said that he obtained the Mayoralty " as it were of Conquest or Maistrye " by terrorizing his opponents with armed men. Soon after, the situation in national politics was somewhat changed by the departure of Lancaster to Spain, where he spent some years in striving to assert his claims to the throne of Castile. The leadership of the opposition to the Court party devolved on Thomas, Duke of Gloucester, the youngest of the King's uncles, a man who had already fallen foul of one section of the Londoners. When the crisis of 1387–1388 came and the Lords Appellant, as they were called, appeared in arms against the King's friends, London felt the full force of the struggle. Brembre did his utmost to rally the city to the King's aid, but the careful citizens were anxious to adopt a purely neutral attitude. The triumph of Gloucester meant the fall of Brembre, who was accused of a series of absurd charges, among which figured the fact that he had advocated the changing of the city's name to Troynovant—the old legendary appellation of the city. For some time no jury could be found o convict the unfortunate ex-Mayor, but at last he was

condemned to death.   This execution was not a civic matter, being due to totally extraneous political questions, but it helps us to see that more and more London was being drawn into the whirlpool of national politics.   Some may have rejoiced at the turn of events, and Northampton's friends were glad of his release, but the short-lived rule of the Appellants can have pleased no section of citizens.   The magnates cannot have welcomed a government which instituted a commission of inquiry into all guilds, with a view to their abolition, due seemingly to the impression that these trade organizations were being used for political purposes, nor can the artisans have rejoiced at the reinforcement of the Statute of Labourers with added severity.

Thus London took quite calmly the reassertion of the King's power, when Richard quietly removed the Appellants, and inaugurated a period of constitutional rule such as England had not seen for some time.   But a fate hung over Richard II.   His reign, begun amidst turmoil, was to end in his deposition and death.   In 1397 he suddenly abandoned his constitutional rule, attacked his old enemies, and began a very orgy of despotism.   This was foreshadowed in 1392 by a quarrel with the Londoners, in which his overbearing character peeped out.   Asked for a loan, the Londoners refused, and maltreated a Lombard who found the money. Richard summoned the Mayor and Sheriffs to his presence, deposed them, and appointed a Warden to govern the city. In other words, he " took the city into his hands," revoked her liberties, and in addition imposed a fine of one hundred thousand pounds.   Further to show his anger, he removed the Law Courts to York, so that the Londoners should be deprived of the advantage of having them close at hand. The quarrel was soon arranged by the intervention of the Queen, but it is interesting to note that when Charles II desired to deprive London of her corporate rights and looked round for a precedent, he found one in this case, just as a few years later, when the nation sought a precedent for the

deposition of James II, it found one in the ultimate fate of Richard II.

It was a sad fate that made the "Londoners' King" ultimately the best hated man in the city; that made him, once the darling of the people when he faced the rebels in Smithfield, a cause of offence, the removal of which was welcomed on all sides. When finally Henry of Lancaster came to snatch the crown from the feeble grasp of his cousin, he found the citizens eager to accept his rule. London's manifestations of joy at a change of sovereign must perhaps always—in the mediæval period at least—be taken at a discount, as being dictated by a feeling that discretion was the better part of valour. But doubtless Richard, first by his quarrel of 1392 and later by his despotic government and financial exactions, made himself an impossible monarch for the average citizen.

Thus did the fourteenth century close for London amid strife and tribulation. They were the outward signs of inevitable change. In the religious, the social, the economic, and political world new forces were at work, and they were to affect London profoundly. But a full century was to elapse before the great crisis came.

CHAPTER VI

FIFTEENTH-CENTURY LONDON

ALL through the fifteenth century London was developing her individuality. More and more she was coming to realize her great commercial future, and to make her trade interests dictate her whole policy. On the whole the city was a gay, contented place; her sons knew how to play as well as how to work, and despite wars and tribulations in the nation at large, she kept on the even tenor of her way. The same old problems remained, it is true. There was still that cleavage between employer and employed which had been growing during the past century, trade unionism—if we may so call it—was becoming stronger, and indeed was instrumental in forcing up the scale of wages to a certain extent. At the same time money and worldly worship were becoming more and more the gods of London society, and by his annual income was a man's honour measured. A popular song of the time brings out the position clearly when it describes its hero's wanderings about the city, being hampered at every turn because he was poor and " for lack of mony I cold not spede."

There is evidence too that a large class in London lived by its wits and was a source of trouble to the authorities. In the records there are constant references to these gentry. William Frankyshe played the confidence trick, and cheated a simple-minded citizen out of money by pretending to be the son of the Duke of Ormonde; Thomas Stokes posed as a trier of ale, and for a time reaped an ill-gotten harvest of fees to which he was not entitled. William Northampton

devised an ingenious kind of blackmail, while William de la Pole bandaged his hand and secured both pity and its monetary equivalent by declaring himself a soldier who had been wounded at Ypres. John Warde and Robert Lynham were artists in their own particular way of business. Their stock in trade was an ell, a piece of red cloth, and a hook and pincers ; open-mouthed and pretending to be dumb, they paraded the streets, giving it to be understood that while trading in foreign lands, they had been maltreated and had had their tongues torn out. A medical investigation discovered an excellent tongue in each mouth, and on a second offence this distinguished couple was expelled from the city. In addition to this type of crime there were the usual convictions for trade offences. Allan Birche was punished for selling defective bowstrings, and the ingenuity of a fraudulent baker found its reward. When persons brought their bread to him to be baked, he had it kneaded anew on a board in which holes were drilled, and thus a portion of the dough was worked through into a pan beneath, so that he was able to take exorbitant toll of all that passed through his hands. On the whole it cannot be said that the city authorities were harsh in their dealings with these minor criminals. On Cornhill there were both stocks and pillory— the former generally used for night-walkers, the latter for offenders against the Assize of Bread, for millers stealing corn brought to their mills to be ground, and such like persons. Derision was the great disciplinary weapon of the age. Thus a defaulting baker was dragged round the city on a hurdle with the offending loaf, which did not reach the prescribed weight, hung round his neck, and jurors who had allowed bribes to influence their verdict were condemned to ride round the city, with their faces to the horse's tail and wearing paper fools' caps on their heads. From serious crime the city seems to have been remarkably free ; commercial scandals there were, in one of which the great name of Whittington was mixed up, murder was an occasional occurrence, but on the whole fifteenth-century London

was a happy place, and her sons knew how to enjoy themselves when they made holiday.

Numerous festivals and celebrations punctuated the year's toil. The hours of labour might be long, but there were numerous whole holidays. Working was forbidden by statute on all Sundays and Holy Days, and the city had its own great celebrations, when all was given over to mirth and laughter. May Day and Midsummer Day were both national and civic festivals. The May Pole was erected with due solemnity on Cornhill hard by the church of St. Andrew, which thence got the name of St. Andrew Undershaft; every First of May garlands adorned the houses and hung from the pole, round which there were dancing and jollification. There, too, was to be found all the fun of an old English fair—hobby-horses, pageants, and mummers. Still more joyous was the Midsummer festival. On the eve of St. John Baptist great preparations were made for the morrow—bonfires were lit and the whole city was illuminated with tiny lights hung all over the fronts of the houses. Every man's doorway was hung with garlands of leaves and adorned with sprays of birch and fennel in honour of the feast. Through the streets so decorated marched in gorgeous procession the Mayor and his Watch, making the circuit of the city, beginning in Cheap and working back to the starting-point.

Apart from these regular festivals there were frequent occasions when the town turned out to do honour to some person or to celebrate some great event. When Richard II was reconciled to the Londoners in 1393, his reception was converted into a glorious pageant; when Henry VI returned from his coronation in France, he made a triumphal entry into the city, and the Londoners did their utmost to conceal, under a wealth of pageantry, the illusory nature of the crown he had received. Perhaps the most typical of all these celebrations, and the one of which we have the most elaborate description, occurred when Henry V returned after his victory at Agincourt. The Mayor and Aldermen in their scarlet robes, followed by a band of citizens in red suits

with the hoods thereof particoloured red and white according
to the city livery, each bearing the badge of his trade, rode
forth to meet him.   At Blackheath the King took the head
of the joint procession composed of his prisoners, a small
retinue of his personal following, and lastly the citizens.

> *To London Brigge thanne rood oure King,*
>
> .   .   .   .   .
>
> *Upon the gate ther stode on hy*
> *A gyaunt that was full grym of syght*
> *To teche the Frensshmen curtesye.*

In his right hand was an axe, in his left the keys of the city,
and beside him a figure representing his wife clad in scarlet.
At the drawbridge a figure of St. George " Our Ladye
Knyght " stood under a splendid pavilion, while grouped
behind him in the houses, boys, arrayed in white, with
glistening wings to represent the angelic host, sang an
English anthem.   On either side of the road imitation
marble and jasper columns bore the supporters of the royal
arms, and the houses along the whole route of the procession
were hung with tapestries on which the mighty deeds of the
heroes of antiquity and of the Kings of England were em-
broidered.   The lattices and windows were crowded with
sightseers in holiday clothes, and in the streets the crowd
surged round the procession and provided unofficial music
with a variety of so-called musical instruments.

> *Full goodly there then they hym grete :*
> *Through out the town thanne gowne they syng*
> *For joy and merthe y you behete.*

At the Conduit in Cornhill, a band of prophets clad in
coats and mantles of gold and standing under a crimson
tent set at liberty a host of small birds " as a sacrifice agree-
able to God in return for victory," at the same time bursting
into a psalm of thanksgiving.   At the Conduit at the east
end of Cheap twelve apostles and twelve kings, martyrs, and
confessors of the succession of England strewed   silver

leaves and wafers on the path, while wine poured from the conduit to symbolize the bread and wine with which Melchisidec received Abraham returning from the slaughter of the four kings. The Eleanor Cross in the centre of Cheap was surrounded by a pageant castle with two arches thrown out on either side, and with a miniature drawbridge leading from the castle to the street level. Across this bridge danced maidens, singing, " Welcome Henry the Fifth, Kinge of Englond and of Fraunce," while above, the angelic host sang the Te Deum. To cries of " Nowell ! Nowell ! " the King and his retinue passed under the arches to the Conduit at the east end of Cheap, which was covered with a sky-blue canopy on which clouds were painted, and surmounted by the figure of an archangel supported by four angels. Under the canopy a majestic figure representing the sun sat upon a throne, and on platforms raised on either side " beautiful virgins," wearing golden girdles, blew down leaves of gold from cups which they held in their hands. At the Cathedral Church hard by, Henry was met by an ecclesiastical procession, which conducted him into the building.

The splendour and the vitality of mediæval London are magnificently portrayed in this scene, showing as it does the citizens in holiday mood, enjoying themselves to the top of their bent. There were times, of course, when the streets of London betrayed a little too much vitality. Frays were by no means unknown, and Henry IV's sons, Thomas and John, were involved on at least one occasion in a free fight, perhaps after a too jolly supper at the house of Lewes John in the Vintry, where both they and their elder brother Henry were made welcome. Taverns also were becoming a feature of city life, and doubtless there were many who, like Hoccleve, the poet, caroused at the Paul's Head or Westminster Gate, and perhaps enlivened their way home by falling foul of each other. Fights of a more serious order were not unknown. The disputes between guilds sometimes ended in blows, and on one occasion, later in the century, the citizens turned out in force to attack the lawyers of the

Inns of Court, a " verbose tribe," as Gower had called them, which was thoroughly detested by the citizens.

The flourishing state of the city in the fifteenth century is testified in buildings both public and private, of which the Guildhall and Crosby House may be taken as illustrations. It was in the year 1411 that the " Guyld Hall began to be edyfied." It is evident from recent excavations and discoveries that this building was on an entirely new site, and quite distinct from the earlier building which had been for long the home of the city government. It was many years before it was finished, and not till 1425 " was builded the Maior's chamber and the Counsell chamber, with other rooms above the staires. Last of all a stately porch entering the Great Hall was erected, the front thereof towards the south being beautified with images of stone." Some difficulty was experienced in raising the money for this important undertaking, but as it stands to-day, even in its very restored condition, with Dance's porch taking the place of the old mediæval façade, it speaks of fifteenth-century prosperity. Still more so does, or should we say did, Crosby Hall, that beautiful structure now banished from its original site to the shades of Chelsea. The Hall, as we know it to-day, was an addition to an existing house built in 1466 by Sir John Crosbie, and described by Stow as a " sumptuous building." In such halls as this did the wealthier Londoners of the day take their meals, entertain their dependents, and dispense the princely hospitality for which they were famous.

The men and women who lived in this prosperous city were —during the first half of the century at any rate—entirely worthy of their predecessors. They showed a sturdy independence coupled with princely munificence. Thus in the early days of Henry VI's reign they championed that unpopular politician, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, in his struggle with Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, who had the support of the Council and the governing classes in the nation generally. To them he was ever " good Duke Humphrey," and they supported him in arms when the

militant bishop massed troops in his palace in Southwark
to attack his rival.   Beaufort was under no illusion as to the
way he was regarded by the citizens, and complained bitterly
of how they had expressed a wish to " have throwen him in
Temyse to have tauht him to swymme with wengis."
Practically to the end of his life Gloucester preserved the
loyalty of the Londoners, who looked on him as their
champion against the baronial clique which every year
tightened its hold over the machinery of government.
Even after his death they revered his name, and for long
cherished a tomb in St. Paul's as his last resting-place.   It
mattered but little that he was really interred at St. Albans ;
reverence for " Duke Humphrey's tomb " was a tradition of
past independence.   Still the citizens could find fault with
their hero when he showed callous disregard to the appeals
for help sent to him by his discarded wife, Jacqueline of
Hainault.   The Mayor appeared before the Council to pro-
test, and more unofficially the fishwives of the newly built
Stocks Market—on the site of the present Mansion House
—processed to Westminster, and even entered the hall, in
which the Lords sat, to present a petition against the Duke's
conduct.

The great typical Londoner of the early fifteenth century
is undoubtedly Sir Richard Whittington, perhaps the best
known traditional figure in the city's whole history, for even
now, surrounded by a wealth of fiction and romance, he holds
the boards annually about Christmas-time at one or other
of our London theatres.   This in itself is a significant fact.
Though it is a hard, sometimes an impossible, task to separate
truth from legend in Whittington's story, the very fact that
legend has grown round his name has its significance.   The
modern historian can never afford to disregard the lesson of
legendary history.   In this case Whittington has become
the personification of the mediæval trader, and this shows
that he was a commanding personality in his day, a man who
led the citizens by the magnetism of his character—the
great Londoner of the fifteenth century.   The story how,

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despondent at his early failures, he fled from his master's house, but, while resting by the way on a milestone in Islington, heard Bow Bells ringing what to his ears seemed to be a refrain calling him back to persevere, since success awaited him, is perhaps impossible to accept as sober historical fact, but at least it teaches us how it was only determination and confidence in his destiny that made a man a successful trader in the growing competition of that day. There are other portions of the Whittington legend which perhaps are more credible. The cat, his only treasure as a raw apprentice, which he ventured as merchandise in his master's ship and which brought him a great profit, is at least credible, though a somewhat similar story is to be found in the commercial annals of many another country. It is obvious that the cat was his mascot, for it is found associated with his name at an early date, and the tale may be taken to illustrate how great fortunes could be made from small beginnings in fifteenth-century London.

Our authentic knowledge of the life of Whittington is not great, but such as it is, it helps us to realize some aspects of London life, and to set right some misconceptions, so popular as to have become accepted historical facts. His parentage is a case in point, for his lowly origin is an invention of the romancer. He came of a good Gloucestershire country-gentleman stock, and as a younger son was sent to London to make his fortune in the time-honoured way. This is typical of the way London was recruited from the country then as now. The traditional barrier between trade and gentility was a retrograde invention of the eighteenth century, and had no place in mediæval London. Sir Ivo Fitz-Warryn, to whom Whittington was apprenticed, was himself a Devonshire man and a member of the Mercers' Company, then rising to prominence and on the way to become the premier Livery Company. Nothing can be more important to realize than the close connexion between the London merchant and the country gentleman in mediæval London. It was this connexion that gave the city its strength, for thereby it was

never out of touch with the rest of the country, and the public opinion of London was never out of harmony with the ideals of the nation as a whole.   Further, the career which Whittington chose is illustrative of the tendencies of the age. In becoming a Merchant Adventurer, a body which was splitting off from the Mercers proper, he showed how London traders were looking for their profits further afield than had hitherto been the case.   London ships were beginning to find their way to ports where English vessels had been previously unknown, and London merchants were importing all sorts of gorgeous apparel, which in itself was indicative of the growing luxury of English life.   It was through luxuries that London became prosperous, so much so that when the wealthy nobility on one occasion decided to boycott the city in return for a supposed insult to one of their number, a deputation of citizens with gifts in their hands waited on the offended lords to induce them to reconsider their decision.

Whittington's rise to wealth was not sudden.   We can trace his growing prosperity in a few incidental references in the records of the city, but ultimately he became the wealthiest of a wealthy body, thanks to the fact that, besides providing kings, princes, and nobles with costly wares, he lent money in large sums to monarchs like Henry IV and Henry V, and in a smaller way to others who needed hard cash.   The use to which he put his money was as typical of the London of his day as was the way he made it, for munificent in life, he left practically his whole fortune to charity at his death.   He rebuilt St. Michael Paternoster-Royal, and there established a collegiate foundation and an Almshouse for poor men, a relic of which is to be found at the present day in the Whittington Almshouses on Highgate Hill.   He provided books for the Grey Friars and for the newly built Guildhall, the latter falling a prey to the cupidity of Somerset, who "borrowed" the volumes and is borrowing them still.   In addition to this he showed a practical interest in the welfare of the citizens by supplying

taps for the conduits. The water-supply of London came from several sources, being brought in pipes from Tyburn or some fountain-head, and was distributed through the city by means of these conduits—public fountains, which stood in the streets much as they still do in towns like Berne and Neuchâtel. Some places had their own private supply. In the records of the Charterhouse were to be found the plans of the pipes which supplied the monks with water, while the Grey Friars drew theirs from the Devil's Conduit or " Chimney Conduit " which has recently been laid bare in Russell Square.

Thus in all his phases Whittington may be taken as a type—type of London merchant, type of generous benefactor, type of England's nascent commercial enterprise, and as a versifier of the time put it :

> *What hathe by hym oure England of honoure*
> *And whate profite hathe been of his richesse*
> *And yet lasteth dayly in worthinesse,*
> *That penne and papere may not me suffice.*

Side by side with him, perhaps, we might place, as typical of another phase of London life in those days, his friend and executor John Carpenter, whose personality was not so magnetic, and who consequently did not impress the imagination of the age, or hand down his name so prominently in history and legend. Nevertheless his importance cannot be exaggerated, and his memory is still kept green by the street which runs southwards to the Thames near to the City of London School. John Carpenter was a type of the city permanent official just as Whittington was a type of the merchant prince. Educated for the law, though probably the son of a trader, he became in time " Common Clerk " of the city, who, after the Recorder, was the chief law officer of the Hustings Court. In this capacity he set to work to collect all the laws and customs and privileges of London from the documents in the city archives. Those documents which he did not think important were not copied *in extenso,*

but included in a calendar at the end of the book. The idea of this compilation was to provide the officials of the Guildhall with a handbook for their guidance, and from the way the manuscript had become thumbed by the reign of Elizabeth, when a clean copy was made, we should gather that it was found most useful. Carpenter was not quite first in the field in thus summarizing the city documents, as just a century earlier Andrew Horn had drawn up a legal book recording the city privileges. Besides being important as an honoured official, and one who represented his city in Parliament more than once, Carpenter is interesting as having left a sum in his will for the education of four poor children, and this benefaction formed the nucleus round which was built up in 1837 the City of London School, which now, in new quarters on the Embankment, flourishes as one of the most important educational foundations in London.

Together these two men represent the London of the early fifteenth century. When they had passed away, there was no one of outstanding personality to take the lead, but none the less the city continued to prosper, and throughout a dull, if eventful, period, despite disastrous war without, followed by civil strife at home, she continued to carve out her commercial future.

The main interest of London history during the later fifteenth century is the attitude of her sons towards national politics. It was the period of the so-called Wars of the Roses, a struggle which, being a purely dynastic and baronial quarrel, had no intrinsic interest for peaceful burghers. Still London could not ignore the ebb and flow of party warfare. As the chief town in the kingdom, she was naturally a prize which each party coveted; as the capital and near the seat of government, she was the key to the political situation, and besides, most of the principal participators in the struggle had houses within the walls. Baynard's Castle, for instance, was the town house of the Duke of York, and Warwick had an establishment in Old Dean's Lane, now called after him, Warwick Lane. More than once during

the struggle the city took on the aspect of an armed camp, when it needed all the tact and authority of the Mayor to prevent the hotheads among the citizens from precipitating a crisis by a too obvious show of partiality for one side or the other.   On one occasion in 1451 a serious riot was only appeased by a parade of armed force " which was the gloryousest sight that ever man in those dayes sawe."   On another occasion in 1454 all the law-abiding trembled in fear when they saw the Lancastrians gathered in force round Mark Lane, Tower Hill, and St. Catharine's, while the Yorkists lay near St. Paul's, round their leader's house on the river front.   At times the mob might strive to show partiality one way or the other, but the attitude of the responsible authorities was one of consistent detachment throughout.   At each crisis of party politics London was affected, at each crisis she strove to prevent the combatants from entering the city.   At the outset, when Jack Cade in 1450 threatened the city from Blackheath, as Wat Tyler had done some seventy years previously, the whole object of the citizens was to keep him out.   But though all sorts of preparation for resistance were made, the gates guarded, and war engines placed on the wharves, the insurgent forces had no difficulty in entering London, for the Common Council could not make up its mind to active resistance.   An inquiry was later initiated to discover how Cade got in, but beyond establishing the fact that he obtained the keys, no result was achieved.   Once within the walls, Cade met with no resistance, and he was able to wreak his vengeance on his political opponents unhindered.   So apathetic were the citizens, that he was able to make his headquarters in Southwark, and cross and recross the bridge at his will. But when the control which at first he exercised both on himself and on his men weakened, when he abandoned his political rôle and took to plundering citizens' houses, it was wonderful how easily he was defeated, how easily the bridge gate was held against him, and he was ignominiously routed. The inference is obvious.   The Londoners had no interest

in resisting his political ambitions or his implied advocacy of Yorkist claims, but when their pockets were affected they were ready to assert their power.

Exactly the same deduction can be drawn from the attitude of the authorities just ten years later, when Warwick, at the head of a Yorkist force, crossed from exile in Calais and marched on London. The same ostentatious preparations for resistance were made, the same manning of the walls, the same guarding of the gates, the same messages to the advancing host to turn aside and not enter the city. The comedy was even carried so far as to forbid the citizens to attend church for fear that they should be taken unawares while at their prayers, and for the Common Council to pass a resolution that no communication received from the Yorkists should be read. On Monday, June 30, a letter came and was read! On Tuesday another came and was read! On Wednesday without let or hindrance the Yorkists entered the city. The authorities had done their best. They had striven to frighten the army away, but they were not going to spill their precious blood in a mere " barons' war," and if persuasion failed, they would use no other weapon. With the Yorkists in their midst they accepted the situation, and they even advanced money to the men to whom they had forbidden the city, and assisted in the siege of the Tower still held for the Lancastrians, giving as their reason that " there seemed to be no other way of preserving the city." Again, ten years later, the reasons for their policy are made abundantly evident. While Edward IV was away in the West, defeating the remnants of his enemies, the Bastard of Fauconbridge appeared on the banks of the Thames and demanded a passage to join his kinsman Warwick. This time the authorities stood firm, and not only manned the walls, but drove off an attacking party. The reason is clear. They were sure of their ground. They told the Bastard that his kinsman was dead—slain and defeated at Barnet—and informed him that the Lancastrian cause had definitely fallen at Tewkesbury five days earlier. They

knew which way safety lay, and it is interesting to note how carefully the citizens followed a struggle in which they did not participate, for they had had special correspondents with Edward's army in the West, with the object of having the earliest possible news of the fortunes of the campaign so as to attune their policy accordingly. There can be no reasonable doubt that had Edward fallen at Tewkesbury, there would have been no resistance to the Bastard of Fauconbridge when he attacked the city. As a final proof of detachment, the Londoners watched apathetically while Richard III plotted the overthrow of his nephew Edward V, refused to take sides when harangued first by Dr. Shaw at Paul's Cross, and later by Buckingham in the Guildhall on the claims of the uncle against the nephew, but quickly agreed to go in deputation to Richard with an offer of the Crown when it was evident that this was the prudent course of safety. When Richard in turn was faced by Richmond, and marched out to put his fortunes to the test on Bosworth Field, the Londoners provided him with money for an equipment, and as soon as the result of the battle was known, sallied forth with every manifestation of joy to welcome the victor as Henry VII. Wily traders to the last, they were ready to accept any accomplished fact in the realm of politics.

Thanks to this wise policy, London prospered despite national disturbances and their reflex action on the city. During the peaceful interval of Edward IV's reign there are ample evidences that commerce had continued to develop all through the anarchy. Edward was by instinct a trader, and knew how to win the hearts of a commercial people. The statutes of his reign have many references to trade, and his sister's marriage with the Duke of Burgundy procured the establishment of a colony of English merchants at Bruges, which was mainly recruited from London. The citizens took a very decided line with Richard III, and compelled that King to declare the system of raising money by " Benevolences " illegal, as it hit the traders very hard, and to consent to certain restrictions upon foreign

apprentices.   Thus in spite of war and anarchy the Londoners were able to prevent their trade being destroyed—indeed throughout the century, whether it is in the glorious success of merchant princes like Whittington at the beginning, or in the calculated opportunism of the authorities at the end, there is a growing commercial spirit pervading the policy of the citizens, for commerce was now more than ever the foundation of the city's greatness.

CHAPTER VII

THE LONDON OF JOHN STOW

It is fortunate for the Londoner that just when the city was undergoing one of the great changes of her existence, when she was finally throwing off the traditions of the Middle Ages, when the Reformation burst upon her, and when the enterprise of her sons was bringing her to a front place among the commercial cities of the world, there arose one who was led to study the antiquities of his native place and to enshrine the results in a work which ranks among the most precious monuments of the past. The muse of history had of late been claiming adherents among London citizens. During the fifteenth century there had sprung up a race of historians, who, while recording the great events of national history, did not forget that they were Londoners writing for the edification of their fellow citizens. Most of these writers were anonymous, but early in the sixteenth century there arose another race of writers—men whose names we know and whose historical interest betrays to us the way the citizens were waking up to the importance of their past. Robert Fabyan, draper and alderman, completed his " New Chronicles of England and France " in 1504, though they were not published till 1516, after his death. Edward Hall, a Londoner by adoption and some time an officer of the Sheriff's Court, left at his death in 1547 a chronicle which was published by Richard Grafton, a London printer, who himself, later, produced a history of his own. Thus the historical spirit was abroad, and fortunately for us it inspired John Stow to abandon the profession of tailor and devote

himself to historical research.   His first interest was national
history, the result of which was his "Annals," which covered
the ground from the mythical King Brute down to 1580,
but soon he forsook those historical paths, where he found
a formidable rival in Holinshed, and carved out a sphere
all his own when he devoted himself to the specialized study
of the London district and its past.   His "Survey of London,"
first published in 1598 and revised in 1603, is a monumental
work, which bears witness to the industry of its compiler
and to the "monstrous observation" with which Ben
Jonson credited him.   Moreover, he lived in a time when
this "monstrous observation" was most useful.   Born in
1525, he died full of years but with small share of this world's
goods in 1605, and thus he knew London before the changes
of Henry VIII's reign, having as a boy fetched the family
milk from the farm attached to the Convent of the Minoresses,
and living to see the working of the ecclesiastical settlement
introduced in the days of Elizabeth.   He saw, too, and as a
rule recorded, all the manifold social changes which came
over London during the Tudor period, and thus his "Survey"
is a document which no Londoner can afford to ignore, and
which is a valuable quarry for historians of all types.   It is,
of course, a book that must be read with discretion.   Etymo-
logy, for instance, was not his strong point, and we must
reject nearly all his derivations of names.   He was apt to
draw no very sharp line between legend and fact in the early
days of London's history, but, as a rule, his statements of
fact were based on sound documentary evidence, his materials
were collected with assiduity and care, he shows frequently
a critical spirit which sifts truth from falsehood, and in some
cases he obviously had access to sources of information
which are now lost to us.   Last, and perhaps not least, quite
apart from his book, his life helps us to realize the social
conditions of a middle-class London family in this period.
It is a picture which in many ways is not attractive, as he
suffered from constant family feuds and disturbances, and
there was not much rest even for the old man of eighty on

the brink of the grave. He who had deserved so well of his age and his city was left to die forgotten and neglected, and the only mark of recognition for his services during his life was a licence to beg his bread in the streets of which he had recorded the history. We of a later age are, perhaps, less ungrateful, but there are still numbers who know not that they should do him honour, and many a Londoner passes the church of St. Andrew Undershaft by, ignorant of the fact that as a good citizen he should enter and do homage at the tomb of the first great historian of his great city.

With the guidance of Stow let us examine the various aspects of London life during this period—commercial, social, intellectual, and religious—for on all these subjects we can learn from him. Throughout the period the citizens continued to improve the economic position of their city. Under Henry VII's rule commerce increased by leaps and bounds. Though money was wrung from the citizens by the royal agents, benevolences were exacted illegally, and Empson and Dudley practised their well-known tricks to enrich the King at the expense of the nation, the attempts to foster home productions met with a ready welcome in the capital, and commercial treaties opened the ports of Flanders to the enterprising London trade. London in the days of Henry VII bore all the signs of a prosperous city, and a Venetian visitor to these shores could write : " In one single street, named the Strand, leading to St. Paul's, there are fifty-two goldsmiths' shops, so full of silver vessels, great and small, that in all the shops in Milan, Rome, Venice, and Florence put together, I don't think there would be found so many of the magnificence that are to be seen in London." When we remember that the Italian cities were among the wealthiest commercial centres of the world, the riches of London, which demanded this great stock of luxuries, are made manifest. The wealth of London, too, was " not occasioned by its inhabitants being noblemen or gentlemen," though " the citizens of London are thought quite as highly

of there as the Venetian gentlemen are at Venice." In every way the government strove to assist this growing commercial development. The protective ideas which had been growing in the past now hardened into a definite policy, while at the same time the selfishness of the London trader was not allowed to interfere with the interests of the nation at large. For instance, when a city ordinance forbade Londoners to attend markets outside the city, it was promptly quashed by Parliament, and the Merchant Adventurers were prevented from driving their English rivals out of the Flemish market.

The sixteenth century was the great opportunity for the merchant adventurer, and all those who looked to far distant lands for trade and profit. The new geographical discoveries had upset the old traditional trade-routes, and the high road to East and West alike was no longer the Mediterranean. London, hitherto on the very outward edge of all trade-routes, now found herself in a far better position with her easy access to the Atlantic and Pacific, the new commercial highways of the sea. She was assisted, too, by the decline of possible rivals. The religious troubles in France prevented that country from seizing the opportunity that offered; the Netherlands were beginning that long struggle for liberty which engaged all their attention, and Spain had many problems to face, though thanks to her position in South America she was the nation most to be feared. It was this that roused national patriotism to fever heat in London, when the quarrel with Spain developed into war in the days of Elizabeth; it was this that led the citizens to provide ships, men, and money for the fleet which defeated the Armada, and to send the trained bands to Tilbury to avert any attempted landing of the enemy. It was the happy chance of the citizens that patriotism and self-interest went hand in hand. Outward signs of the city's growing trade, wrested from the hands of the foreigner, are to be found in the foundation of new trading companies. The Merchant Adventurers increased enormously in wealth and importance. Probably already

chartered, they received their first known incorporation from Henry VII, which was renewed by Elizabeth in 1564. In the reign of Edward VI the Muscovy Company sprang from the body of merchants who financed Willoughby and Chancellor's North-West Passage expedition, which managed to establish commercial relations with Russia. In 1579 the Turkey Company was incorporated, followed by the greatest of all in 1600—the East India Company. The prosperity which these new ventures brought is well illustrated in the city itself by the building of the first Royal Exchange. Hitherto the London traders had had no official place of meeting, " to treate of their feate of merchandyzes," and, as one writer puts it, they were like pedlars who had to carry on their business in the rain. Many, it is true, used the nave of St. Paul's as a place of meeting, but though the sacrilegious aspect of the question did not worry them, the Cathedral was not a suitable place and was not their own. The suggestion of an exchange first came in 1535 from Sir Richard Gresham, who got the idea from the Antwerp Bourse. When Mayor, he did his utmost to secure a suitable site, and Henry VIII was induced to support the scheme, but the times were troubled, men were far more excited as to the fate of the monasteries that were being dissolved, and the project fell through, to be revived by Gresham's son, Sir Thomas. The latter, having made his fortune at Antwerp, where he had also acted as Elizabeth's agent, took the matter up in 1565, and with great difficulty obtained a site, for the good business men of London did not see why they should not make a profit out of the undertaking. The foundation-stone was laid on June 7, 1566; two years later it was used for business, and in 1571 it was formally opened by the Queen, whose statue still adorns the present building. From then till now the Royal Exchange has stood upon that site ; twice it has been burnt down— once in the Great Fire of 1666 and again in 1838, but the new building still serves as a monument to the way London's trade adopted its modern form in the sixteenth century.

Sir Richard Gresham also stands as a type of the trader of his times. None too scrupulous, a Merchant Adventurer who made his money in the carrying trade, he, like hundreds of his fellows, grew rich in the London of the day. He is remembered to-day by his bequest of his house in Bishopsgate and certain rents and moneys for lectures on the seven arts, a benefaction which, after many vicissitudes, has developed into the Gresham College, which the Corporation is rebuilding at the present moment. One other aspect of commercial London at this period is brought to our notice by the building of the Royal Exchange. The architect, the Clerk of the Works, and many of the workmen were foreigners, and this caused endless trouble, and compelled the appointment of special officers to protect the men from molestation at their work. This hatred of foreigners was a characteristic, though by no means a new one, of London in the sixteenth century. In the days of Henry VII there had been bitter attacks on the Hanseatic Merchants, housed—as they were— in the Steelyard hard by the present Cannon Street Station, and confirmed in their privileges by Edward IV. In 1517 there had been Evil May Day, when an apprentices' riot had developed into an organized attack on the foreigners congregated in the district of Blanchappleton near Mark Lane. This feeling was but a symptom of the time. Competition was forcing itself into every department of life, and nowhere was it stronger than in commerce and industry. The trader was helping the growth of national pride and national aggressiveness, and it was natural that London should reflect this tendency.

It would, however, be a total misconception of London life to describe the citizen's outlook as limited to one interest. At no time is this true, and least of all at this period. The city was beginning to feel the effects of the new intellectual ideas that were permeating England: at the beginning of the century, it gave a shelter to the "New Learning"; at the end it was the home of Shakespeare and the Elizabethan dramatists. Slowly the individualistic conceptions of the

Renaissance were working their way in England, and many of the scholars who professed them were Londoners, notably Sir Thomas More and Dean Colet. More was a Londoner by birth and had been educated at one of London's most famous schools, that of St. Anthony in Threadneedle Street. He had spent some three years of his early life in the Charterhouse, but ultimately did not assume the monkish habit. He lived for a time in Crosby Hall, the famous city mansion in Bishopsgate Street which was pulled down only a short time ago, and later built himself a house in Chelsea, near the site on which Crosby Hall has been re-erected. He was an intimate friend of John Colet, another Londoner who has left his mark on city life. The son of a wealthy merchant and well connected, Colet had drunk deeply of the new ideas of scholarship, and besides conducted a crusade against the corruption of the ecclesiastics, in which he was probably guided by that frequent visitor to London—Erasmus of Rotterdam. He not only undertook the reformation of his Chapter at St. Paul's, but he also founded an educational institution which survives to the present day. Not content with the Choristers' School at St. Paul's, he founded a new school taking its name from the Cathedral, and this, though it is no longer on its old site but has been removed to Hammersmith, keeps green the memory of the great reforming Dean. This intellectual movement was strengthened by the fact that William Caxton had brought the new discovery of printing to London. As a boy he had come to London from Kent, and as Governor of the Merchant Adventurers in Flanders he had learnt the new way of reproducing books. In 1476 he established the first English printing press in the precincts of Westminster Abbey, and from this time forward the printer became an important factor in London life. The press soon moved from Westminster, and established itself in Fleet Street, and the modern booksellers of Paternoster Row carry on the tradition thus established.

It is noticeable that nearly all the scholars of the New Learning were reformers, though by no means Protestants—

Colet was dead before the crisis came, More suffered for Catholicism—and in their reforming spirit they reflected fairly accurately the attitude of the majority of Londoners. Not for some years did the doctrines of Luther and Calvin get any hold on the city, but there were many ready to support Colet in his open condemnation of the immorality of priests, their avarice, pride, and lust. The Londoners as a whole had no love for the priests as a body, and their attitude is well illustrated by the sensation caused by the case of Richard Hunn. This man, well known and popular in the city, had fought a priest in the law courts for trying to get money out of him, and shortly afterwards he was arrested on a charge of heresy and placed in the Lollards' Tower, where one day he was found dead. At once there were cries of foul play, and Dr. Horsey, Chancellor to the Bishop of London, was among the suspected. A coroner's inquest brought in a verdict of murder, and the King had to intervene and hold an inquiry in person, but though he decided that there was no case against the gaolers, public opinion continued to be excited ; the text of the inquest and verdict was circulated as a pamphlet, and posthumous proof that Hunn was a heretic of the deepest dye had no effect. For some time the city discussed nothing else, and the cry against the priests increased in volume. It is therefore not surprising that no signs of opposition were to be found in London when Henry VIII, for his own ends, threw off allegiance to the Pope, though incidentally there was no little feeling against the divorce of Queen Catharine, and on the first Sunday that Queen Anne was prayed for, not a few, when they heard the name, got up and left the church. Royal protests to the Mayor produced strict injunctions against any such signs of feeling, and each guildsman was ordered to prevent both his wife and his apprentices expressing their repugnance. On the religious question the Londoners were, on the whole, apathetic. They accepted Catholic doctrine and no Pope under Henry VIII; they accepted the

steady Protestant tendencies of Edward VI's governments; they raised no protests at the ecclesiastical restoration of Mary. During this last reign, for instance, when Wyatt raised his rebellion against both Catholicism and the Spanish marriage, the city made no attempt either to support or resist him. It was a mere chance that he found Ludgate shut against him, due to a casual remark of a Merchant Tailor standing by, against whom, it is true, some murmured for his officious interference. But there is no doubt that when Mary lit the fires of Smithfield, she kindled at the same time a hatred of the faith which she professed, and henceforth there were frequent, if isolated, acts which show a growing Protestantism in the city. On one occasion a dead cat, tonsured and clad in ecclesiastical vestments, was found in Cheapside; on another an attempt was made to knock the Host out of the priest's hand in the Corpus Christi procession, and on Easter Day a priest saying Mass at St. Margaret's, Westminster, was attacked. There was, therefore, a definite Protestant feeling which welcomed Elizabeth, but the stern Puritanism of later London was a growth of her later years. As yet the citizens had not thrown themselves whole-heartedly into theological controversy.

The event in the Reformation which did affect London profoundly, both on the topographical and on the social side, was the dissolution of the monasteries. There is no evidence that the monasteries were markedly unpopular in London; indeed, a few years earlier both the Crutched Friars and the Poor Clares had received financial assistance from the city government, but no protest was made at the Dissolution, which began with isolated houses such as Elsing Spital in 1530 and the Priory of the Holy Trinity, Aldgate, in 1531, and ended in the suppression of all, perhaps the most notable instance of persecution bravely borne being that of Prior Houghton of the Carthusians. The immediate effect of the suppression of the monasteries was to convert to secular uses a whole host of ecclesiastical buildings, which

were mostly given or sold for a small sum to greedy courtiers. The Chancellor, Sir Thomas Audley, secured both Aldgate Priory and the Charterhouse, but the latter soon passed into the hands of Lord North, and the Duke of Northumberland lived there while he acted as Protector for Edward VI. It then became the town house of the Dukes of Norfolk before being bought by Thomas Sutton, who converted it into the school and almshouse which are still extant. Austin Friars became the mansion of the Marquis of Winchester, but the fourth lord had to sell it to pay his debts, and the name Winchester House in Broad Street is now the only surviving relic of his occupancy. St. Helen's passed into the hands of Sir Richard Williams, while the Leathersellers secured the Refectory as their Hall ; St. Thomas Acon was bought by Sir Thomas Gresham and conveyed to the Mercers' Company, which still occupies the site, and the Black Friars passed later into the hands of Sir Thomas Cawarden, who pulled down the church and made the site into a fashionable residential quarter, while the great hall was divided into tenements, till purchased by Burbage for a theatre. Few of these ecclesiastical buildings survived their seculariza- tion very long. It was a utilitarian age, which cared nothing for architectural beauty if it could not be made useful. In some cases the buildings were capable of adaptation, as at the Charterhouse ; sometimes a monastic church was converted, in whole or in part, to parochial uses, as befell the chancel of St. Bartholomew's, the Grey Friars church which became Christ Church, Newgate Street, and St. Mary Overie, South- wark, which became the parish church of St. Saviour's, now Southwark Cathedral, while the Austin Friars was preserved for the Dutch congregation. But for the most part com- mercial London swept over abandoned ecclesiastical London, and the glories of the past were overthrown for the utility of the present.

Great as were the topographical changes brought about by the Dissolution, they were as nothing to the social problems created thereby. It is as untrue to say of London, as of any

other part of the country, that the disappearance of the monasteries created the poor-law problem, but none the less the monasteries had cared for the poor and healed the sick, while together with the chantries, which were abolished early in Edward VI's reign, they had also taught the young. It was soon evident to the citizens that something would have to be done to carry on the work, partially at least, performed by the monks and chantry priests. Collections for the poor had been made at the parish churches before the Dissolution, but now larger funds were needed than could be produced by this means. In 1547 all Londoners were compelled to pay the half of a fifteenth towards the " Relief of the Poor," a sort of local rate which anticipated the levy enforced by government at a later date. In addition to this, in the following year was started the " Brotherhood for the Relief of the Poor," to which most of the chief citizens subscribed from one to half a mark yearly. Thus the double system of official and voluntary relief was adopted from the first. Still this did not provide institutional treatment, and even before this it had been realized that something must be done to replace the hospital work of the monks. The blind of Elsing Spital, the sick of St. Bartholomew's, the insane of Bethlehem, and the lepers of St. Thomas's must be provided for, and as early as 1537 Sir Richard Gresham, as Mayor, petitioned the King for the reorganization as secular hospitals of four of the disused monasteries—St. Bartholomew's, St. Thomas's, St. Mary's Spital, and the Abbey of St. Mary Graces by the Tower. At first no answer was forthcoming ; the despoiler was not anxious to disgorge any of his prey ; but in 1544 St. Bartholomew was refounded under the management of the city, to bring " comfort to prisoners, shelter to the poor, visitation to the sick, food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, clothes to the naked, and sepulture to the dead "—in a word to perform the seven acts of corporeal mercy. Evidently St. Bartholomew's, as thus refounded, was intended to act as a general almshouse as well as a hospital for the sick, but the old tradition survived, and the

latter function continued to be the chief interest of the new as of the old institution.   Thus St. Bartholomew's can to-day boast of being one of the oldest, if not the oldest hospital in this country, with its roots in the reign of Henry I, and what is more, that it has continued on the same site, doing the same work in a way that no other London hospital has done.   The reign of Henry VIII saw no more refounding, but in 1551 negotiations undertaken by the city secured the buildings and endowments of St. Thomas's in Southwark for a payment of £2500, a fairly large sum for the times, and thus the second oldest hospital of the London district was re-established, to be moved to its modern site in the nine-teenth century.   At the same time an agitation was proceed-ing for obtaining the buildings of the Grey Friars for a school in which fatherless and helpless children should be educated. Meetings were held, and the chief mover in the project was the Mayor, Sir Richard Dobbs, whose efforts were crowned with success in 1552.   Later Ridley paid a high tribute to the public-spirited action of Dobbs : " Thou in thy year didst win my heart for evermore for that honourable act, that most blessed work of God, of the erecting and setting up of Christ's holy Hospitals which by thee and through thee were begun."   Thus did the famous school of Christ's Hospital take its origin.   Still there was need of a " House of Correction " for those who could not or would not work, and this was provided in the following year when the King presented the city with the old disused palace of Bridewell, which had been rebuilt by Henry VIII, though in his later years he had abandoned it for St. James's.   With the palace the King gave money and bedding, and it continued to be used for poor-law, though later mainly for prison, purposes down to 1863.   One of Edward VI's last acts was to issue a charter of incorporation for these four houses under the title of royal hospitals, which were all placed under the control of the civic authorities.

In addition to these the work of Bethlehem was continued in its entirety, for the Mayor and Commonalty purchased

its patronage in 1546, and Henry VIII conveyed the buildings to them. It was therefore possible for Stow to write of it : " In this place people that be distraight in wits are, by the suit of their friends, received and kept as afore, but not without charges to their bringers in." The educational work of St. Thomas Acon also was continued by the Mercers, who occupied the site. Thus did London face the problems which one aspect of the Reformation thrust upon her. It is doubtful whether the provision was in any way adequate to the needs, but something was done towards building up a new organization to take the place of that which had been swept away.

Change was as apparent in the least serious aspects of life as in more important matters in John Stow's London. At the beginning of the period there was still much of mediæval gaiety in the amusements of the citizens. The old festivals were still observed, and May Day in particular was the occasion for all the old-time jollity and fun. As a young man Henry VIII loved to rise early and go a-Maying with his queen from his palace at Greenwich to the neighbouring height at Shooter's Hill. There, on one occasion, we are told by the historian Hall, he was met by Robin Hood and his merry men all clad in green, who gave an exhibition of their prowess with the bow, and then entertained their sovereign and his consort to a feast spread in a leafy bower. But before the reign was very old this festival ceased to be observed in the city. The riots of Evil May Day in 1517 cast a shadow over such celebrations, and never again was the Maypole reared on Cornhill. As Protestantism of the extreme type began to appear in England, the celebration of these feasts came into disrepute as associated with all kinds of superstition, and in 1549 the spirit of the age was made manifest in an attack on the harmless and disused pole, which still was hung along the houses of Shaft Alley. One Sir Stephen, the Incumbent of St. Catherine Cree Church, which was all that remained of the old Aldgate Priory, started the movement. He seems to have been an eccentric

of strong Protestant tendencies. " I have oft-times seen this man," writes Stow, " forsaking the pulpit of his parish church, preach out of a high elm tree in the midst of the churchyard, and then entering the church, forsaking the altar, to have sung his High Mass in English upon a tomb of the dead towards the North." He advocated all kinds of reform, such as the renaming of churches and the days of the week, " the fish days to be kept any days except Friday and Saturday and the Lent any time, save only betwixt Shrove-tide and Easter." Ultimately he declared war on the Maypole in a sermon at Paul's Cross, as a result of which the inhabitants of the houses on which it had hung unused for thirty-two years, " after they had well dined to make themselves strong," says Stow maliciously, cut it in pieces. " Thus was this idol, as he termed it, mangled and after burnt." From this time there was a distinct tendency— though not much more than a tendency—towards Puritanism in the city, but it was enough to bring the old traditional festivals into disrepute, for it made use of the argument that the keeping of festivals other than Sunday interfered with the work of the week, a line of thought which must have struck home to the hearts of Londoners, ever more and more intent on the accumulation of this world's goods.

Still it is evident that Puritanism was not strong in the city ; the age which saw the death of May games saw also the rise of the stage-play in London. Plays had been acted within and around the city for many a long year. Miracle plays and mysteries had been of the essence of English mediæval life, and though we have no record of any particular cycle being peculiar to London, such as Coventry or York possessed, we know that on occasions the citizens were treated to scenes from Biblical history enacted on the pageants or moving platforms used for this purpose. On one occasion Richard II was present when such a performance took place at Clerkenwell. Later, plays of varying orders were performed in the courtyards of the London inns by bands of strolling

players, who became very numerous after the accession of
Henry VII. These courtyards were in many ways highly
suitable for the purpose, the stage being erected in one corner
and the audience standing either in the yard or in the gallery,
which as a rule ran round the first story of the building and
abutted on the yard. By degrees the players came to
desire a more permanent setting for their representations,
and about 1576 there were built on the south-west of Finsbury
Field the two earliest theatres known in London—the
"Theatre" and the "Curtain," the latter of which is still
commemorated by Curtain Road. Both were of wood and
very flimsy, and, in both, fencing matches, gymnastic per-
formances, and other such things took place in addition to
the performing of plays. The city authorities looked with
no kindly eye on these innovations, as they often were the
cause of the gathering of unmanageable crowds, which broke
into riot on the least excuse. Quite impartial authorities
describe the playhouse as the centre of all kinds of rowdiness,
and frequently abstained from attendance because of the
brawls which so often occurred. It may be that Puritanism
had something to do with the attitude of the authorities,
though the chief argument that they used was the danger
of spreading infectious disease by the assembling of large
crowds, and in this they were justified, for London was
constantly visited by plague during the Tudor period.
Be this as it may, Finsbury soon ceased to be the theatrical
quarter of the town, and the transplantation of the "Theatre"
to Bankside—the district on the south side of the Thames
just west of Southwark—in 1598 or 1599, made that the
home of the drama in the later days of Elizabeth and at the
beginning of the Stuart era. There was the famous "Globe,"
built out of the materials of the "Theatre," which lasted
with one rebuilding down to 1644, and about the exact site
of which there has been so much recent controversy. Hard
by were the Bear Garden, rebuilt in 1606 and again in 1613,
and the "Rose," started in 1592. One theatre alone remained
on the north bank of the Thames in the Blackfriars, and the

continuance of this was due to the fact that Elizabeth
established here her own particular playhouse. Long and
bitter was the struggle over this place between the Queen
and the Corporation, the latter declaring that they would not
regulate the other theatres if this one were kept going despite
their protests. The duel continued into the reign of James I,
who, while agreeing to shut up certain theatres, refused to
abolish the Blackfriars, and so nothing was done. About
this time, too, yet another house had been built on the
north side of the river, and named the " Fortune," being
later restored as a substantial brick building and approxi-
mating to the modern theatre in having a tap-house
attached.

Doubtless the complaint of the theatres being a centre
of rowdiness was well substantiated. If we are to believe
Dekker's description in the " Gull's Horn Book," it was a sign
of good breeding for a young gallant to make himself a
nuisance to players and audience alike. He would come in
late, sit on the stage—the place of honour in some houses,
though some think that sitting on the stage was not allowed
in the Bankside theatres—and insult the players or pick
quarrels with the pit. The floor of the theatre, or pit, was
unprovided with seats, and all the riff-raff of the town
collected there if they could afford the 2d. or 3d. for entrance.
The rest of the accommodation was provided in the galleries,
or circles as we should call them, which were divided into
" rooms " or little boxes much after the style of a modern
German theatre. The more orderly of the audience sat here,
but the women were generally masked. The amount of
scenery on the stage is still a matter of controversy, but
there is no doubt that very elaborate costumes were worn,
though they were devoid of historical propriety. Mark
Antony appeared in a doublet, and Richard III fled from
Bosworth Field in Elizabethan armour. Amid such sur-
roundings were the plays of Shakespeare and other drama-
tists produced, and to audiences which can hardly have
appreciated them as works of art. It is significant

of the disapproval with which the early theatre in London was regarded, that Stow practically ignores the whole development of the drama as a thing beneath his notice, not realizing that here lay a new development which was to become the central aspect of the social life of the town.

The drama was by no means the only entertainment for the people, even within the walls of the theatres themselves. Bull- and bear-baiting was a favourite pastime, and cock-fighting was exceedingly popular, and it was about this time that the cockpit in Whitehall, where now the Treasury stands, became a fashionable centre. Archery was still among the out-door sports, though it was on the decline ; indeed, London was everywhere becoming more townified in her tastes ; the old days of simple joys were over and only the glorious pageants of the Tudor period remained as relics of the past. These were indeed glorious. Elizabeth's State entry into her capital was full of pomp and splendour, and there still survives an elaborate picture of the coronation procession of Edward VI. But more and more the Londoner was being driven indoors for his amusements, and this explains the importance of the tavern in Elizabethan London. Strangely enough the London inns were far inferior to their fellows in the country, though superior to foreign ones—that is, if we are to believe Harrison in his "Description of England" of 1587—but this may be accounted for by the fact that the London innkeeper catered less for lodgers and more for daily visitors than did his fellow in the country. For the London tavern was frequented by all classes, and served as a club both for the court gallant and the city shopkeeper. It had its private rooms, where often the gambling was very high, and into these the mere frequenters of the taproom never entered. Your young man who would prove his mettle had to be as well up in the etiquette of the tavern as in what was desirable in the home of a nobleman. Indeed much of the social life of both rich and poor centred in these resorts.

With all his weaknesses, and they were many, the Londoner of the sixteenth century was in many ways a worthy descendant of his ancestors. He was perhaps more selfish, more self-assertive than of yore, qualities which frequently accompany worldly success. For successful these men undoubtedly were. They were founding the modern London.

CHAPTER VIII

THE STRUGGLE WITH DESPOTISM

THE inevitable result of the increasing trade and prosperity of the city was a growth in the number of inhabitants. It is quite impossible to calculate the population in the Middle Ages, for there is practically nothing to go upon, but at the beginning of the seventeenth century we get attempts to estimate it, and in 1610 the Venetian ambassador put it roughly at 300,000 souls. The natural tendency was for the London inhabited district to develop, but throughout the seventeenth century this was considerably hampered by proclamations issued by the Crown forbidding the building of any more houses in or within three miles or more of the city, a shortsighted policy which was even adopted by Cromwell in his days of power. These proclamations were dictated apparently by a fear that London would become unwieldy, but the result was that those citizens who desired to live in comfort were driven to migrate to the outlying villages such as Greenwich, Chelsea, Kensington, and Paddington, if they were willing to brave the long stretches of almost impassable road which divided these places from the city. Still there was some building near London, thanks to special licences granted to people of importance or to those who had some means of influencing the government. Thus during the early days of the century the district of Lincoln's Inn Fields and Covent Garden was built over and became the abode of fashion, thanks to its proximity to the court at Whitehall. The Strand was still much frequented. It had ever been the home of great palaces; the Savoy of

John of Gaunt was now a thing of the past, but in the middle of the sixteenth century the Protector Somerset had built his mansion on the site of what is now Somerset House, and during Stuart days the Duke of Buckingham established himself near the Savoy, where the modern Villiers Street and Buckingham Street preserve the memory of his dwelling. Many of these Strand houses possessed gardens running down to the river, some of them having stairs from which boats could be boarded, a relic of which survives in the Water Gate of Buckingham's palace, now divorced from the river by the Embankment Gardens.

In such building as there was, the name of Inigo Jones stood out pre-eminent. Born in 1572, he lived till the Commonwealth, and so his working days fell in the reigns of James I and Charles I. His genius never really had a fair chance, for when he lived a spirit of economy pervaded the city. Money was so sorely needed for the development of commerce, that there was little available for such luxuries as building, even if there had been no proclamations to hinder the planning of new houses. Further, he was regarded as an instrument of royal extravagance, and so his patrons were rather of the court than of the city. Within the walls it is true he left his mark on St. Paul's, to which he added a portico at the west end. Imbued with Renaissance ideas like his great successor Wren, he failed to appreciate the essential features of Gothic architecture, and he therefore designed his portico on classical lines, something like that which can now be seen outside the church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, though it was both deeper and broader. But his chief work was at the West End. He produced an elaborate design for the rebuilding of Whitehall, in Stuart days the premier palace of England's King, but the only part ever carried into effect was the Banqueting Hall, which has escaped the fires which have swept away the other buildings, and is now the modern United Service Museum. In the new fashionable quarter he built the church of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, which has been

entirely rebuilt since, but on the lines designed by its first archi-
tect ; he was also responsible for several houses in Lincoln's
Inn Fields, though modern utilitarianism has swept nearly all
of them away.   Great architect though he was, he never
had a chance in the London district, no opportunity such
as the Fire of 1666, of which Wren was to avail himself so
ably.

Overcrowded as it was, it was essential that London should
find some outlet for her surplus population, and to a certain
extent this offered itself in the colonizing enterprises of the
seventeenth century, notably in two directions—Ulster and
Virginia.   So far as the former was concerned, the citizens
were thrust into it by the persistence of James I.   Ireland
was a sore problem with the English government, and the
idea of planting English colonists there had been con-
sidered a possible means of reducing the country to order
from the earliest days of the reign.   When the Earls of
Tyrone and Tyrconnel, with other lesser lords, fled to the
Continent for fear of punishment for complicity in a plot,
the way was opened for the plantation of the northern
districts, since their vast estates escheated to the Crown.
James I at once decided that the Londoners should help in
this colonizing scheme, and to this end he circulated a docu-
ment summarizing various " motives and reasons to induce
the city of London to undertake plantation in the North of
Ireland."   This production bears a ludicrous resemblance
to the advertisements of modern colonies so familiar to the
twentieth-century Londoner.   Ireland, it seems, was gifted
with unlimited resources.   It was well watered, game and
cattle abounded, the fisheries were most productive, hemp
and flax grew like weeds, and to add to these attractions,
exceptional advantages in the way of customs and admiralty
jurisdiction were promised.   As arguments in favour of
London embarking on the venture it was pointed out that
here would be a place whence to derive food for the London
poor, which was a growing problem of the time, while
colonization would solve the difficulties of over-competition,

whereby " one tradesman was scarcely able to live by another," and of over-population, which assisted the spread of infectious diseases so alarmingly. Finally it was urged that just as Bristol had made Dublin, so should London make Derry.

The voice of the charmer fell on very deaf ears. The Livery Companies looked on the scheme with unfavourable eye, and it was only after a first refusal to entertain the proposal and after considerable pressure had been brought to bear on the citizens, that at last it was reluctantly agreed to send a deputation to Ireland, and if their report should prove favourable, to undertake plantation. Great care was taken to nurse this deputation when it arrived. Acting under detailed instructions from home, the able Lord Deputy, Sir Arthur Chichester, saw that his visitors were well fed, and housed whenever possible in English, not Irish, houses. They were personally conducted by discreet persons, who chose only good roads, and explained away unpleasant matters, like the fear felt of the native Irish, and on his own initiative the Lord Deputy provided at a very cheap price a wonderful collection of samples wherewith the deputation should illustrate their report. These included a medley assortment of hides, tallow, salmon, herrings, eels, beef, iron ore, copper and lead, and it was therefore an inevitably favourable report which the disgusted Londoners received. Bound by their pledge, the Companies undertook plantation, and in March 1613 the Irish Society was incorporated. But there were endless bickerings between the King and the Companies—the land was not handed over when promised ; members of the Companies refused to pay the share at which they were assessed ; the King was furious because the fortification of Derry did not begin at once, because not half enough houses were being built according to the agreement, and because " the mere Irish " were being employed by the new settlers and not driven out to find a home in other parts of Ireland. The truth was that the two parties to the agreement looked on it from two totally

different points of view—the King was interested in the pacification of the county, his aim was political, while the Londoners looked on their lands as an investment, refused to import labour when they could get it cheap on the spot, and declined to convert pasture into tillage as the former was more profitable. Still the plantation had its effects, and to this day the rechristened town of Londonderry and the surviving Irish Society testify to the connexion between Ulster and the English capital.

In the colonization of Virginia the citizens took a more willing and independent part. In 1606 two Companies were incorporated to colonize Virginia on the basis of paying all the costs and taking all the profits. The one was to colonize the north of the country, and being mainly composed of West-countrymen it was known as the Plymouth Company. As this was a failure almost from the first, the whole burden of colonization fell on the other Company, known as the London Company, as its members were recruited almost exclusively from the capital. More enterprising than their fellows, these adventurers persevered despite terrible obstacles. Two expeditions were sent out in 1606 and 1608, but they had hard work to keep the settlement going. In 1609, the Company having been reformed and given greater powers, it appealed to the Lord Mayor and King for monetary assistance, using the same arguments as James I in the previous year, that it would remove the surplus population of the city and diminish plague and famine were it successful. With considerable difficulty more funds were raised, fifty-six Livery Companies were induced to take shares, not counting numerous private citizens, headed by the Lord Mayor. So far as emigrants were concerned, the Company offered food, clothes, a house, orchard and garden to any family which went out, promising that the possession of such lands as were given them should be confirmed to themselves and their heirs. As a result, about five hundred new settlers under Lord Delaware were despatched and saved the situation in Virginia, but there

were many difficulties still to face. Yellow fever broke out on board and the plague when they landed, and more money still had to be raised. In 1611 the Company was on the verge of ruin, but some funds were raised by lotteries, in which individuals, companies, and even churches in their corporate capacity took shares, but yet there was a dearth of the right kind of colonists. In 1618 the city hit on a brilliant scheme to export vagrant and homeless children. The Company agreed to take one hundred of these children between the ages of eight and sixteen, to feed, clothe, and educate them and to give each fifty acres of land, the boys on reaching the age of twenty-four, the girls when they became twenty-one or married. The cost of sending them out was provided by a special rate levied on the citizens. So successful was this venture, that another batch was sent out in the following year under much the same conditions, though now the children had to be over twelve years of age. Even the King was struck by this scheme, and sent to the Lord Mayor suggesting that the loafers who hung about his court should be shipped to Virginia at the city's expense, and taking consent for granted, forwarded a batch of those undesirables to Bridewell, but the citizens refused to throw their money away on this alluring project. Thanks to the enterprise and public spirit of the Londoners, the colony was ultimately made a success, and by 1622 possessed an English population of 4000 souls. At a thanksgiving service, held that year at St. Mary-le-Bow, the chaplain of the Company paid a high tribute to London support in the past and urged its continuance, using the old familiar argument that only by emigration could the problem of over-population at home be solved. " Ponder the forlorn estate of many of the best members of your city," he said, " and help them, O help them out of their misery. What you bestow on them in their transportation to Virginia they will repay at present with their prayers, and when they are able with their purses."

Thus was London laying the foundations of the British

Empire, and feeling her way towards a wise emigration policy, but before long she was compelled to withdraw her thoughts from the colonial problem abroad and the social problems at home, which were so closely connected, and devote her attention to political questions, which more and more threatened her prosperity, and to religious questions, which were ultimately to bring civil war. Evil portents attended the advent of the Stuarts to the throne. At the accession both of James I and Charles I plague was raging in the city. The former's entry into London had to be delayed for more than a year, and even then special care had to be taken to render the streets free from infection. In the case of the latter the usual procession had to be abandoned, for the disease then appeared with extreme virulence. Men fled from the infected area, and it was estimated by Donne, the erratic Dean of St. Paul's, that there were 1000 deaths a day. The effect on the prosperity of the city was terrible. As one Londoner wrote to a correspondent, " No trading at all, the rich all gone, housekeepers [householders] and apprentices of manual trades begging in the streets, and that in such a lamentable manner, as will make the strongest heart to yearn." Small wonder that in these circumstances the temper of the citizens was not of the best, and that they were not ready to brook royal interference or royal financial exactions.

It was characteristic of the Stuarts that they could never understand anybody's point of view but their own, and this quality drove both James I and Charles I to undermine the loyalty of their chief city, and thereby to open the way for the downfall of their house. James I all through his reign continued to aggravate the citizens. He had a passion for uncalled-for interference, and on more than one occasion showed that in civic matters he was largely under the influence of an egregious person named Cockaine. An alderman of the city, Cockaine none the less persisted in coquetting with the court with the idea of gaining advantages over his fellows. He was not a little to blame for the quarrels between the

King and city over the plantation of Ulster, and on another occasion he induced James to interfere with commercial matters in a way which extremely annoyed the Londoners. For no earthly reason a royal decree suppressed the Merchant Adventurers and established a new Company with Cockaine at its head. James was entertained lavishly by his aldermanic friend, who received a knighthood in return, but all this advertisement could not avert the failure of the new Company and the consequent necessity of restoring the old one. Further the citizens were worried by constant applications for loans from the King, and the very irregular repayment of them when made. For instance, in 1618 a year's grace was demanded for the redemption of moneys advanced. Moreover promissory notes or " privy seals " were thrust on London citizens in open day, which these canny business men did not like, for it advertised their financial position. These difficulties were enough to raise murmurs in any commercial town. But apart from their pockets, the Londoners were alienated by the licence and rudeness of James's courtiers. In 1616, when the newly created knights of the Bath were being entertained at Drapers' Hall, they behaved with such overbearing rudeness and were so offensively familiar with the citizens' wives, that the Sheriffs had to interfere. So strong was the feeling against the court, that Lord Mayor Sebastian Harvey withstood all the blandishments of the King, who wanted him to allow the marriage of his daughter to young Christopher Villiers, saying that he would rather see her dead than so wedded.

The objection to the immorality of James's court was emphasized by the fact that Puritanism had been of late making great way with the citizens. This was clearly seen when the great controversy between Hooker and Travers arose. The former was Master of the Temple—the title given to the chaplain—while the latter was his assistant, or Lecturer as it was called, and used his position to preach the Calvinistic doctrine of Predestination in opposition to the High Anglicanism of his chief. The Londoners soon

showed their support of Travers, and gave Hooker a very
unfavourable reception when he attacked the doctrine of
Predestination in a sermon at Paul's Cross.   There is little
doubt that these Puritan and anti-Anglican tendencies of the
Londoners were largely due to the carelessness of the average
parish priest.   He was content to do very little, and most
of the preaching in the parishes was performed by special
" Lecturers " appointed and paid by the congregations them-
selves and therefore more ready to take on the theological
complexion of their hearers.   London in the days of James I
was becoming a home of theological controversy, and the
Protestant colour of most of this theology was seen in the
attitude of the citizens to the King's foreign policy.   They
welcomed with joy the marriage of the Princess Elizabeth to
Frederick Elector Palatine, the leader of the Calvinistic
party in Germany, whom they entertained right royally
in 1613; and when the Thirty Years' War broke out, and the
forces of Roman Catholicism threatened the champion of
German Protestantism, they were most anxious to send
help to the King's son-in-law.   James was sitting on the
fence, and when approached on the question by the civic
authorities, he made the characteristic reply : " I will never
command you nor entreat you, but if you do anything for
my son-in-law I shall take it kindly."   Part of his hesita-
tion was due to the fact that he had got a plan of his own
whereby he would form a marriage alliance with Spain and
thus win the neutrality of the Spaniards in the religious
quarrel in Europe, and at the same time get a large dowry
with the Infanta, which would be useful in paying his debts.
All through the prolonged negotiations with Spain, the
Londoners showed their old hatred of that country and their
new and growing aversion to Roman Catholicism.   Despite
royal proclamations enjoining subjects not to discuss affairs
of State, the citizens made their feelings plain by constant
insults to Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador, in the streets.
Once his hat was snatched off amid the jeers of the by-
standers ; again, his house was attacked by a mob in revenge,

because one of his suite had run over a child; finally in 1621 a veritable struggle between the government and the London apprentices took place over the case of one of their number, who had shouted after the much-persecuted ambassador as he was carried in a litter through London, " There goes the devil in a dung cart." At the first attempt to whip the offender a rescue was effected, and it was long before the authority of the forces of law and order was vindicated. But the most notable demonstration of popular feeling came when in 1623 Prince Charles made his ill-fated expedition to Madrid. Under orders from the King the Bishop of London instructed his clergy that they were not to offer up any prayers hostile to the intentions of his Majesty, and that they were to pray for the " safe return of the Prince and no more." To the great edification of his congregation, one incumbent obeyed the letter and not the spirit of this injunction by praying for the return of the Prince *and no more*, and when Charles did indeed return without a bride the city went wild with excitement. " I have not heard of more demonstrations of public joy than were here from the highest to the lowest," wrote one who witnessed these celebrations.

If James I alienated the citizens, Charles I did so even more effectually. From the first the Londoners grumbled at his partiality for the Duke of Buckingham, for whom they had felt some liking for a moment when he was considered to have had a share in breaking off the Spanish match. He was blamed for all the royal vagaries, for the unsuccessful and, it was believed, anti-Protestant foreign policy of the crown, and the trend of public opinion was betrayed by the assault on an unfortunate astrologer, Dr. Lamb, who was said to be a friend of the Duke's, and by the placard which appeared mysteriously one day in Coleman Street with the following legend : " Who rules the Kingdom ? The King ! Who rules the King ? The Duke ! Who rules the Duke ? The Devil ! " But when this cause of offence was removed by the assassin's dagger, there were many other complaints of the government. Financially the rule of Charles was

found most oppressive. The citizens had to be constantly resisting demands for loans, and the levying of tonnage and poundage without Parliamentary grant. Many a Londoner —such as the wealthy merchant Vassal—went to prison rather than pay the customs duties, or suffered distraint on his goods, like the Cornishman, John Rolls, who had set up business in the city. Even worse was the demand for Ship Money. Before the famous writs of Ship Money were issued in 1634 and 1635, the citizens had complained of being called upon to provide men and ships for the purposes of defence. The demand was based on precedent, and they had responded to similar calls from Elizabeth, but they protested against the demand for a thousand men for the ill-fated Cadiz expedition, and in 1625 appointed a committee to devise means of escaping similar levies. In 1626 and again in 1629 they protested against renewed demands, pointing out that circumstances had changed since Elizabethan days, and that now more ships were demanded than in 1558, when the danger was far greater. To the writs of 1634 and 1635 the city offered uncompromising opposition, and Richard Chambers was the London Hampden, taking a case to the King's Bench but being imprisoned for his pains. Later in 1640 the King compelled the Lord Mayor to take action. A house-to-house visitation resulted in the sum total of one declaring himself ready to pay, and when the Sheriffs refused to distrain, the Lord Mayor failed entirely, because at the very first attempt a worthy draper, whom he tackled, announced that he would put the cloth distrained down to his Lordship's account.

More and more the citizens were beginning to blame the King's great minister Strafford for their political wrongs. He was credited with being the avowed enemy of the citizens and with having given Charles the advice . " Sir ! you will never do good to these citizens of London till you have made examples of some of the aldermen," the result of which was the imprisonment of four of these worthies. It was thought, too, that he intended to establish a military

despotism and to institute " a plundering of the city and putting it to a fine or ransom." The King's great ecclesiastical minister, Laud, was earning even greater hatred. Honest and energetic, he nevertheless earned the reputation of a bigot and was certainly tactless both as Bishop of London and as Archbishop of Canterbury. His strong High Church or Arminian tendencies led him to try to reduce his clergy to order, a proceeding that awakened the indignation of Puritan London, which hated the surplice and regarded with suspicion the sacramental teaching represented by it. He was believed, quite unjustly, to have Romanizing tendencies, and great opposition was roused at the quite simple ceremonial with which he consecrated the rebuilt church of St. Catherine Cree. The Londoners showed their hostility to Arminianism in every way. A mob looted Lambeth, the Archbishop having escaped to Whitehall. When Prynn and Burton were condemned for Puritan attacks on the court, they were given a triumphal procession through the city, and to emphasize their position, 1500 Londoners petitioned for the abolition of episcopacy root and branch. Not a little sympathy was shown in the capital for the Scots, who were likewise resisting the enforcement of episcopacy and the Prayer Book. It was no exaggeration when Clarendon wrote of the " unruly and mutinous spirit of London " at this time, and spoke of it as " the sink of all the ill humour of the kingdom."

The days of civil war were at hand. Great were the rejoicings in the city when in base betrayal Charles yielded Strafford a victim to the popular will, and let Laud lie in prison, whence he was only to be taken to his death. But there were some Royalists in the city, notably the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, who doubtless owed their position to royal influence, for the city's representatives in Parliament were strongly opposed to the government. For a moment it seemed as though after the death of Strafford the King might count on the support of the Londoners ; he was even invited to dine at the Guildhall, where, however,

he alienated much of the better feeling for him by a characteristically injudicious speech. "I see that all those former tumults and disorders have only risen from the meaner sort of people and that the affections of the better and main part of the city have ever been loyal." Naturally "the meaner sort" did not like this, and protested in their best clothes and driving in carriages to disprove this allegation. The real importance of the incident is that it shows that there were two distinct parties in the city, though it was only a small minority that was for Charles. This the events of the next few days showed clearly. When Charles finally fell foul of his Parliament and tried to arrest the five members, they found a refuge in London, and the King pursued them thither in vain. The die was cast. On January 9, 1642, Charles left Whitehall for Hampton Court, and the five members were escorted back to Parliament two days later. The Civil War had begun, and London was definitely committed to the Parliamentary side, for her inhabitants were henceforth all "either real or constrained Roundheads." The Royalist Lord Mayor was deposed for publishing the King's Commission of Array in the city, and such as were bold enough to confess Royalist sympathies were imprisoned in Crosby House.

The support of London was a most valuable asset for the Parliamentary party. It gave a lead to the commercial classes in the country generally, and, what is more, it placed the balance of financial power on the side of the King's enemies. The citizens at once agreed to a loan of £100,000 to Parliament "most freely and with great alacrity," and later they submitted to the enormous weekly assessment of £10,000 with a monthly rebate of £3000. But not only did they provide money. The military energy of the capital was illustrated by the comprehensive scheme of defence arranged by the authorities. The inner wall was strengthened, and an entirely new line of fortifications was thrown up so as to include practically the whole inhabited district—Westminster and Hyde Park on the west, Shore-

ditch on the north, Mile End on the east, and St. George's
Fields on the south. And in addition to this, throughout
the beginning of the war it was the citizen troops that were
the backbone of the Parliamentary army. There was a
force ready to hand in the Trained Bands, which had been
first definitely organized in companies in the days of Eliza-
beth merely for the protection of the city. In 1614, how-
ever, they were included in the general muster of the
national forces, and since then they had been completely
equipped and exercised, the nature of their armour being
specified and each ward being made responsible for its own
quota. Two years later the force was divided into four
regiments, each with its own headquarters. By an agree-
ment between the Common Council and the House of
Commons, as soon as Charles left London the bands were
put under the command of Captain Philip Skippon, Sergeant-
Major-General of the London forces, and were provided with
eight cannon and proportionate ammunition. The number
of men enrolled was increased by 2000 to forty companies
of 200 each, commanded by six colonels and thirty-four
captains. But even this did not exhaust the resources of
the Londoners, for within a few weeks two more regiments,
each consisting of 1200 men, and four troops of horse, each
consisting of sixty men, were raised and systematically
trained, and again after the indecisive battle of Edgehill
the city raised 100 light horse and 3000 dragoons to be sent
under Skippon to reinforce the Parliamentary army under
Essex. Everything was done to induce men to serve, and
apprentices were promised reinstatement after the war by
their masters if they joined the colours.

These citizen soldiers bore the brunt of the fighting down
to 1644. It was a special London force which relieved
Gloucester, an event considered by many to have been a
turning-point of the war in favour of the Parliamentarians,
and at the first battle of Newbury, shortly afterwards, it was
the London pikes who withstood the repeated charges of
Rupert's horse, and despite the cannonade which thinned

their ranks stood " like so many stakes." As the Royalist historian Clarendon declared, " they behaved themselves to wonder, and were in truth the preservation of that army that day." But brave, enthusiastic, and efficient though these men might be, they were citizens first and soldiers second. As the war lengthened out from months to years, signs of dissatisfaction began to appear in the ranks. The war was proving disastrous to the city. The shops were more often closed than open, disorder was frequent, and on many occasions between 1642 and 1644 there were more or less violent demands that peace should be made with the King. The citizen soldier never forgot that his real business in life was in the shop and not in the camp, and immediately after the first battle of Newbury there were signs that he was getting tired of the war. When a force was sent out to retake Reading, an order had to be issued that anyone failing to obey the summons should have his shop shut and should be expelled from the city. But soon after this even the staunchly Parliamentary officials of London were demanding that their men should either be paid or sent home. Mutiny and disaffection began to appear in the ranks. On one occasion the Trained Bands returned home suddenly in the midst of the siege of Basing House, and at Abingdon, on another occasion, they refused to go " one foot further except it be home." Waller reported that they were constantly mutinous, crying " Home! home ! " and that as many as 400 were deserting every day. It was this that drove him to the conclusion that the only way to win through was to establish a standing army.

The advice of Waller was followed. London had played her part, but she could do no more, and new forces would have to take her place in the fighting line. It was a momentous change. Hitherto London had been practically supreme in the councils of those who opposed the King, thanks to her military importance, but now she was to lose this advantage, though not quite at once. The germ of the New Model Army, as the new standing force was called, is to

be found in a small permanent force established in July 1644, but this could not dispense entirely with London's help and contained a contingent from the city.   Even after the New Model itself was established in 1645 there were times when the citizen soldier was still required, and London was asked for troops in June, in July, and again in September of that year.   But the main responsibility now rested on the regular forces, and their position was strengthened by the hearty co-operation of the capital, for it was hoped now that efficient convoys would be provided for merchants.   The citizens indeed prepared a rod for their own backs by begging Parliament to give greater freedom of action to the military commanders.

The New Model was entirely successful in bringing the Royalists to their knees, but in the hour of victory the religious question came up once more, and this time it divided the victors.   The cleavage was largely between the Presbyterians and the Independents—between the organization of a national church on the basis of representative government and the acceptance of the right of each congregation to manage its own affairs and regulate its own doctrine —between the principle of no toleration and that of complete toleration for all Puritan sects, only excluding Papists and Prelatists.   On the one hand Parliament leant towards Presbyterianism, on the other the army was wholly Independent in feeling.   London was closely involved in the struggle, because her religious convictions had been growing in intensity as the years went on.   Already in 1643 the ugly side of Puritanism had appeared in an iconoclastic frenzy which destroyed the " superstitious and idolatrous monuments " in Westminster Abbey, and demolished the restored Cheapside Cross " in regard to the idolatrous and superstitious figure there about sette and fixed."   The Puritanism of the citizens was also rapidly assuming a Presbyterian form ; indeed, London and Lancashire shared the honour of being the only two really Presbyterian districts in England. There was no desire for toleration, nay rather a bitter opposi-

tion to it, but at the same time the Londoners refused to accept the establishment of Presbyterianism by Parliament. The Church should dominate the State, not the State the Church. The result of this religious attitude was a growing estrangement between the city and the army, which, in 1647, having secured the person of the King, advanced on the capital. Every attempt was made to avert what it was believed would be an overwhelming disaster. The army was petitioned, a vain effort was made to raise forces to resist, all kinds of intrigue and negotiation were carried on, but the authorities had to submit to the inevitable, and in August they offered an official welcome to the army. But the officers proved no light taskmasters. They demanded the immediate payment of large sums for the arrears of the soldiers, and Fairfax threatened to quarter the army on the city and to seize what he wanted if this was refused. They established a puritanical reign of terror in the city, the theatres were pulled down, the trading days of the shop-keepers were arranged according to puritanical ideas, and the apprentices were forbidden such innocent games as tip-cat. The inevitable result was a Royalist reaction in the city, which synchronized with the outbreak of the second Civil War, but when the army marched out to subdue this Royalist rising, the Londoners again rallied to the anti-Royalist cause, only to be treated with even greater severity when the army returned, for Fairfax demanded all kinds of supplies at the point of the sword, and seized moneys to the extent of £27,000 stored in the Weavers' Hall. The tyranny of Charles towards the city had been as nothing to that of the army.

With the execution of the King and the establishment of the Commonwealth, the city was no better off. More demands for money, more threats to quarter the soldiers on the city were made. The civic constitution was remodelled under the influence of that mania for destroying old institutions which for a short time affected all those in power. The Lord Mayor refused to proclaim the Commonwealth and was

duly fined and imprisoned in the Tower, and when the proclamation was made two aldermen refused to attend as it was contrary to their oaths. Everywhere in the city there were evidences of the disastrous effects of the war. The public coffers were empty, and every plan conceivable and inconceivable was tried to replenish them. Expenses were cut down, sumptuary regulations with regard to food and clothing were issued, civic feasts were discontinued, the timber in Richmond Park was sold; a postal scheme, the profits of which were to relieve the poor, was organized but suppressed by the Government. So unfortunate was the state of affairs, that few could be induced to take office, and an army of unemployed was clamouring for work or relief. It was therefore not surprising that the feeling against the existing order of things grew intense. Riots were frequent, disturbances arose from the outrages committed by the soldiers, and a bloody affray was the outcome of a mutinous meeting at the Bull in Bishopsgate. It was the Levellers who were responsible for this, men who had entered the ranks of the army to win peace and equality, and who saw that there was even less freedom than before they had fought. The leader of this movement was John Lilburne, who was tried for sedition and mutiny at the Guildhall soon after these events, and was given a unique reception by the citizens on his acquittal. His long speech struck a responsive chord in the hearts of the citizens, who cried " Amen " to his words when he declared : " I had rather choose to live seven years under old King Charles's government when it was at the worst before this Parliament, than live one year under their government that now rule. Nay, if they go on with that tyranny they are in, they will make Prince Charles have friends enow, not only to cry him up, but also really to fight for him and to bring him into his father's throne."

This being the state of affairs, the Londoners instinctively looked to the one strong man who could command the situation. They welcomed Cromwell's victories in Ireland and

Scotland, they welcomed his assertion of power, they welcomed his protectorate and would gladly have seen him King ; they supported his government and his policy, save that they did not like the Navigation Act. When he died the situation was again changed. The advisers of Charles II abroad at once began to play on the fears of the citizens, pointing out the danger of another army despotism, for all the letters of the exiles show that they considered the attitude of London to be the key of the whole situation. Moreover, when Monk began his famous march southwards, his mind was made up on one point only, and that was that he must secure the co-operation of the capital. The peace of the city hung in the balance for some days after Monk's arrival, but eventually he and the citizens determined on a restoration. By March 1660 the King's return was freely spoken of and the use of the Royal Arms began again. Full submission and explanation of past conduct were sent by the authorities to Charles, who replied in a gracious letter that there was no thought of revenge in his heart, but on the contrary he had " a particular affection " for the city. On May 29 the exiled King entered his capital, being met with due solemnity at St. George's Fields. " It is impossible to relate the glory of this day expressed in the clothes of them that rid and their cloks," declared the elated Pepys, interested as ever in clothes and finery.

Thus had London fought for liberty, and gained as a reward the severest despotism she had known. Her money had been seized, her Lord Mayor deposed and a nominee of the government substituted in his place, her Common Council abolished, her sons compelled to feed an avaricious soldiery. In the end her only course was to welcome the son of the father to whose execution she had given consent. Still, even in these dark days there were Londoners who could be proud of their native city and rejoice at her greatness, though for the time it might seem dimmed. The great poet of the age, perhaps the greatest master of English that has ever been known, sang of the glories of the home he loved.

John Milton was a Londoner to the core.   Born amidst " the busy hum of men," as he would have said, in Cheap, he lived the best part of his days within the walls, and despite trouble and sorrow could describe his town in glorious phrases :

> *Too blest abode !   No loveliness we see*
> *In all the world, but it abides in thee.*

At the cry of danger he would rouse men to the call of arms :

> *Captain or colonel or knight in arms*
> *Whose chance on these defenceless doors may seize,*
> *If deed of honour did thee ever please,*
> *Guard them, and him within protect from harms.*

CHAPTER IX

THE PLAGUE AND THE FIRE

BEFORE the restored Stuarts had been on the throne six years two terrible calamities befell London. The great Plague of 1665 and the great Fire of 1666 came, as it were, at the parting of the ways. New ideas had been growing in London for nearly two centuries, but to a certain extent they had had no opportunity to be worked out to their logical conclusion. New commerce, new religion, new politics had all influenced London, but in many ways her outward shape was that of the old mediæval city of the past. Plague and fire now did their work, and before Charles II died a new city, instinct with new life, had arisen on the ashes of the old. The " Plague of London " was by no means an isolated occurrence. Epidemics had recurred at unequal intervals ever since the first appearance of the Black Death. Their general character was the same, though they differed in detail. The Black Death had spent itself before the accession of the Tudors, but its place was taken by the " Sweating Sickness," which while not so deadly, being curable in certain instances, was equally sudden when it took a fatal turn. Thus on one occasion Cardinal Wolsey's secretary, Ammonius, the friend and correspondent of Erasmus, boasted to More that his precautions made himself and his family immune, and was dead that same evening. This was in 1517, when the epidemic lasted six months, but both before and after this the same disease appeared in the city. With the Stuarts began the Plague technically so called. There had been four attacks of it before 1665, in

1603, 1625, 1630, and in 1636, the first two of which had been the most serious. We are enabled to gauge their extent, thanks to the Bills of Mortality which were kept with remarkable accuracy from 1603 onwards, not to mention the parish registers, of which a good many have survived the carelessness of their custodians. The city, it seems, was never quite free from plague all through these years, and the attack of 1625 was very virulent, as of fifty-four thousand deaths thirty-seven thousand were attributed to the prevailing sickness. The symptoms of this seventeenth-century epidemic were very similar to those of earlier days. The first signs were fever and vomiting, and glandular swellings followed, after which there was small hope of recovery. The plague spots began to gangrene almost immediately, and many died within a few hours of being attacked. There is no doubt that the frequent disturbances in London were due partly to the effects of these epidemics. In 1630 a scarcity followed the plague, and resulted in considerable social disorder, aggravated by pamphlets which urged the despoiling of the wealthier citizens.

It must be conceded that there was little in the organization of London to stay the spread of any infectious disease. The doctors of the day had advanced but little beyond their mediæval predecessors. A broken limb was set or a tooth extracted as skilfully by the local blacksmith as by the qualified physician or surgeon. Cupping, scarifying, and blistering were practically the sum total of the remedies for the plague, and England was no worse in this respect than other lands. When Genoa was attacked in 1666, of all the patients received into the hospital of La Consolazione during the first two months not one survived. The overcrowding of the city, as we have seen, must have been terrible, though we have no accurate knowledge as to the numbers crowded into the old-fashioned and insanitary houses. Such contemporary estimates as we have differ very greatly, the more conservative ranging about six or seven hundred thousand, the highest reaching one and a

half millions. Whichever estimate we accept, we must
remember that the prohibition against house building in
the London district condemned the large number of inhabi-
tants to dwell in totally unsuitable houses, and probably
the lack of cleanliness, which Erasmus had noticed a century
earlier, still continued to make what was already unhealthy
a hundred times more so. There was no drainage system,
the open kennels still carried off most of the waste water,
and in most cases the water drunk by the inhabitants was
polluted.

The mediæval system of water-supply had long been found
inadequate, and on more than one occasion in the sixteenth
century the city authorities had considered the advisability
of taking the matter in hand. In 1543 powers had been
obtained to repair the existing system and bring fresh supplies
from Hampstead ; in 1570 Parliament had authorized the
tapping of the River Lea, but in both cases no further action
had been taken. The work of tapping new sources was
ultimately left to private enterprise. In 1581 Peter Morice,
a Dutchman, built " a most artificial forcier " at London
Bridge, to pump up Thames water for the districts round
Gracechurch Street and Leadenhall. In 1591 Federico
Gianibelli—a famous Italian engineer—got leave to erect
new waterworks at Tyburn. In 1593 Beavis Bulmer was
given some assistance by the authorities to erect a pumping-
engine at Broken Wharf, while a few years later Henry Shaw
was allowed to draw water from the Fogwell Pond in Smith-
field for all who were ready to pay for it. But practically
all these sources were more or less polluted, and even more
so were the wells attached to the houses, from which probably
the large majority of the inhabitants drew their supplies.
In 1606 the Corporation woke up again to its duties and
received permission to tap an entirely new source in the
springs of Chadwell and Anwell in Hertfordshire, but again
the task frightened them, and nothing was done till a public-
spirited goldsmith, Hugh Middleton, offered to undertake
the enormous engineering task that it then was. The

difficulties to be faced were enough to daunt a brave man. Opposition met the promoters at every turn. The owners of the land through which the pipes had to be laid declared that their property was being ruined; no one was anxious to help, though the Justices of the Peace in Middlesex and Hertfordshire had been ordered to give Middleton all necessary assistance. In the city, men said that the Common Council had given its rights and privileges to a private individual, who was making a profit out of them. A Bill to rescind the privileges granted was even introduced into Parliament, but the civic authorities interviewed the Secretary of State and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, arguing that Middleton was very public-spirited to take the risk, and pointing out that the new supply would be of immense advantage to the health of the city. The Bill was dropped, and the work went on. Hampered for lack of funds, Middleton was fortunate enough to interest James I in the scheme to the extent of putting money into it. A fair illustration of the way the whole enterprise was regarded is to be found in a contemporary cartoon showing James being drawn out of a quagmire by the seat of his breeches, and underneath the legend, " King James submerged in New River water." At last the New River, as it was and still is called, was opened, being now in the hands of a company, Middleton being so poor that he had to beg a loan from London, and the canny James even let him off the necessary fees when he was created a baronet. Like so many pioneers he died a poor man. It was many a year before the New River Company could show any profit at all. Men did not want the water which had to be paid for; the brewers, for instance, vainly tried to get permission to use the Thames, and it was only the fact that the King held shares that prevented the supply from being disused altogether. It was, indeed, a master-stroke when Middleton secured James as a shareholder, for in 1616 the Privy Council ordered that all houses where it could be conveniently used should be provided with it. Still its use was very

slight, and royal interest in the scheme lapsed when
Charles I sold his share, taking an annuity of £500 for a
half-interest in the Company.   The authorities, too, despite
their earlier arguments, did not fully realize the importance
of a pure water-supply in relation to health, and in all
official utterances the use of the water for putting out fires
took precedence of everything else.

Thus in every way London was not in a fit state to combat
any epidemic, and the fearfully hot summer of 1665, when,
as Pepys tells us, the very swallows languished in the air,
made the city a very forcing-bed of disease.   For some time
an outbreak had been feared, for at the end of 1663 news
came that Antwerp and Hamburg were infected.   The
King and the aldermen took counsel together as to the
best way of averting the spread of the plague to the city,
and at the latter's suggestion a lazaretto was established at
Gravesend, and there all ships from infected areas were
compelled to stay in quarantine.   Thanks to these pre-
cautions it was not till the end of 1664 that the first case
appeared in the parish of St. Giles-in-the-Fields, the taint
having been introduced, according to the President of the
College of Physicians, in a bale of flax from Flanders.   Still,
for some time the outbreak was not serious ; one death
occurred in February, two in April, and it was not till the
warm weather came that the death-rate went up alarmingly.
It was reported that the first case within the walls was
that of a certain Mary Ramsay, and opposite the entry of
her burial in the registers of St. Olave's, Hart Street, you
can still find the ominous letter P.   As a matter of fact
the Bills of Mortality give the first death within the walls
as occurring in the parish of St. Mary Woolchurch in May.
From June to September the hand of death was on the
city, and all infection had not ceased by the beginning of the
year.   A great fear descended upon the city, and all those
who could fled in panic, as they had done in 1625, but they
were really little better off in the country than elsewhere.
The so-called Plague of London was by no means confined

to the city or to England. In the West, for instance, the situation was every whit as bad as in the capital, and in the little Somersetshire village of Wiveliscombe no fewer than 468 corpses were buried in 312 days, while when Italy was infected in the following year, a thriving place like Genoa suffered far more than any English town. There, of a population of 95,000, 28,000 fled from the city and of those remaining 65,000 died.

Many were the acts of devotion and self-sacrifice for which this calamity gave the opportunity. Many, of course, deserted their posts, notably the large majority of city rectors, and their pulpits were temporarily occupied by Nonconformists, who seized the opportunity to condemn the luxury and licence of the city, for which they declared this visitation was a punishment. Lord-Mayor Lawrence stuck gallantly to his post, and refused to allow any alderman to desert, even fetching back those who had already gone. Monk, the firm friend of the city, now Duke of Albemarle, also stayed to do his best, and the Earl of Craven braved infection and laboured to assuage the lot of the afflicted by providing a sort of Cottage Hospital in Soho. Everything that could be done was attempted by the city authorities. They were not new to such a crisis, and they borrowed some of the measures adopted in earlier visitations. A Red Cross was painted on all the infected houses, and no case was allowed to be removed, the number of mourners at funerals was limited, and the streets were cleaned. The schools were closed, inns and taverns were open only to Londoners, and vagrant dogs, believed to carry infection, were slain. Fires were lit in the streets when the cooler weather of September began, partly to give warmth to the starving poor, partly with the idea of purifying the air. The burial of the dead was a problem that increased in magnitude as the days wore on. The " dead cart " passed through the streets every night with the awesome cry, " Bring out your dead," and later the work was so heavy that both day and night the gruesome sight appeared. Pits were dug for the reception

of the corpses, the two chief being at St. Martin's Fields on the west and Mile End on the east ; but there were others also at Bunhill Fields near Finsbury, where a disused grave-yard still survives, and at Tothill Fields in Westminster. Besides this the city churchyards were filled to overflowing, as the registers of churches like St. Giles's, Cripplegate, and St. Olave's, Hart Street, testify. After a time it was found necessary to order greater care in burial, and the use of pits was forbidden by the aldermen, each corpse being given a separate grave. Men worked with a will, and the courage displayed in the face of danger was truly marvellous. An instance of duty carefully and quietly done is to be found in the registers of St. Giles's. There the sexton remained at his post and continued to do his duty as of yore, a fact testified by the registers, which are written throughout in the same hand without any signs of haste or panic, each burial being recorded with minute care, and the profession, dwelling, and parentage of the dead being entered whenever the information was available. Thus do musty records reveal a modest story of anonymous heroism.

Not the least of the difficulties which the officials had to face was the folly of the inhabitants, who refused to help in the observance of regulations. " But Lord ! " cried Pepys, " to consider the madness of people of the town, who will (because they are forbid) come in crowds along with the dead corpses to see them buried." London saw a strange mixture of panic and callous fatalism during these terrible days, and we have only to turn to the descriptions of eye-witnesses to realize the full horror of the situation. Pepys, who stayed to give help till the end of August, has left us several graphic pictures of his experiences. " Lord ! how everybody looks, and discourse in the streets is of death and nothing else, and few people going up and down, that the town is like a place distressed and forsaken." Later he jots down his impressions in his disjointed way : " My meeting dead corpses of the Plague, carried to be buried close to me at noonday through the city in Fenchurch

Street. To see a person sick of the sores, carried close by me by Gracechurch in a hackney coach. My finding the Angel Tavern at the lower end of Tower Hill shut up, and more than that the alehouse at the Tower Stairs, and more than that, that the person was then dying of the Plague when I was last there a little while ago at night. To hear that poor Payne, my waiter, had buried a child and is dying himself. To hear that a labourer I sent but the other day to Dagenhams to know how they did there, is dead of the plague, and that one of my own watermen, that carried me daily, fell sick as soon as he had landed me on Friday morning last, when I had been all night upon the water . . . and is now dead of the plague. . . . And lastly that both my servants W. Hewer and Tom Edwards have lost their fathers, both in St. Sepulchre parish, of the plague this week, do put me into great apprehension and melancholy and with good reason." The terror of those days is here graphically portrayed, and perhaps even more so in a letter he wrote on September 4 after he had retired to Woolwich. " I having stayed in the city till above 7400 died in one week, and of them above 6000 of the plague, and little noise heard day or night but tolling of bells ; till I could walk Lombard Street and not meet twenty persons from the one end to the other and not fifty upon the Exchange ; till whole families (ten or twelve together) have been swept away ; till my very physician (Dr. Burnet) who undertook to secure me against any infection (having survived the month of his own being shut up) died himself of the Plague ; till the nights (though much lengthened) are grown too short to conceal the burials of those that died the day before, people being thereby constrained to borrow daylight for that service ; lastly till I could find neither drink nor meat safe, the butcheries being everywhere visited, my brewer's house shut up, and my baker with his whole family dead of the plague . . . Greenwich begins apace to grow sickly." Lastly, we may take the picture of a faithful minister of religion who braved disease throughout the epidemic, and in a pamphlet, " God's

Terrible Voice in the City," left a record of his impressions. " Now people fall as thick as the leaves in Autumn when they are shaken by a mighty wind. Now there is a dismal solitude in London streets, every day looks with the face of a Sabbath day, observed with greater solemnity than it used to be in the city. Now shops are shut in, people rare and very few that walk about, insomuch that the grass begins to spring in some places, and a deep silence in almost every place, especially within the walls. No prancing horses, no rattling coaches, no calling in customers, nor offering wares ; no London cries sounding in the ears. If any voice be heard, it is the groaning of dying persons, breathing forth their last, and the funeral knells of them that are ready to be carried to their graves."

According to the Bills of Mortality the deaths for the year ending December 19, 1665, were 97,306, of which 68,598 were attributed to the Plague. Perhaps we may say that a tenth of the whole population died, though the percentage would be much higher if consideration were taken of those who fled at the first sign of danger. The epidemic of 1665 was perhaps little worse than some earlier ones, but its great significance lay in the fact that it was the last. This was largely due to the great event of the following year, when the major portion of the city was burnt. Men are ever quick to forget their past fears, and by the beginning of 1666 London had returned to the even tenor of her way, with little thought of doing anything for the improvement of sanitation. But fire came to do what man would not undertake. Fire, even more than plague, had been the constant bane of London. The wooden houses, survivals of a past age, the overhanging eaves, all made the danger of any conflagration intense. Here and there we pick up evidence of " divers great fires " which city chroniclers thought too usual an occurrence to record at any length. Charles II realized the danger to the city, which he declared was very dear to him in wealth, trade, reputation, beauty, and convenience, and urged more diligent care in averting it

by the more diligent execution of the Act for the Repair of Highways and Sewers, which also regulated the buildings of the city. The King's foresight was justified. At one o'clock on the morning of Sunday, September 2, a baker's oven in Pudding Lane, the site of the present Monument, caught fire. No one seems to have taken much notice of such a usual occurrence. Pepys in his house near by in St. Olave's parish was wakened by his servant at three o'clock with the news, but having had a look at the conflagration quietly went to bed again. But the hot summer, hotter even than the last, and the east wind which had been blowing hard for some days, helped the flames, and three hundred houses were burnt in a few hours. There was no real organized attempt to combat the flames; fire-brigades in the modern sense there were none, the water-supply was ineffective, even when New River water was available the only way to tap it was to get at the pipes and break into them, as we gather from a reference in 1631 to "many breaches made in the pipes of water and otherwise upon occasions of divers great fires." Lord Mayor Bludworth was totally incapable of grappling with the situation. Like others he had treated the matter at first as unimportant, and when he woke up to the gravity of the situation he found himself unable to direct operations. When a message from the King bade him buckle to and pull down houses so as to make an oasis across which the fire could not leap, he cried, "Lord! what can I do? I am spent. People will not obey me. I have been pulling down houses, but the fire overtakes us faster than we can do it." It was not entirely his fault that so little was done. The inhabitants were far more concerned in saving their own chattels than in combining in a concentrated effort to fight the flames. "Nobody to my sight," wrote Pepys "endeavouring to quench it, but to remove their goodes and leave all to the fire." Indeed, the worthy diarist himself devoted his energies to carrying out his household goods to a friend's house in Bethnal Green, while he con-

cealed his money in the cellar and buried his treasured wine and Parmesan cheese in the garden. But this accomplished, he did his best to assist those who were trying to quench the flames, and it was he who brought men to blow up houses in the neighbourhood of the Tower, so as to stop the fire from spreading eastwards, and thus incidentally saved his own dwelling. The King and the Duke of York also did their best. "The Duke of York hath won the hearts of the people with his continual and indefatigable paynes day and night in helping to quench the fire, handing buckets of water with as much diligence as the poorest man that did assist." But water was of no avail against such a raging furnace as this. Steadily the flames swept westwards and northwards. The whole heart of the city was consumed by Tuesday, even the houses on the northern end of the bridge having been burnt and Southwark being threatened. But the wind saved these districts. Man only rose triumphant over the flames when Pepys' example was followed, and gunpowder was used to blow up houses not yet attacked. At last on Thursday evening the citizens who still had beds could sleep in them peacefully, but four-fifths of the city had been destroyed. All within the walls had been burnt, save a narrow fringe extending from the Tower to Cripplegate. The Royal Exchange, the Guildhall, and St. Paul's were in ruins, and the flames as they rushed westwards had been extinguished only as they approached the Temple and further north at Pye Corner near Smithfield, where a tablet records that here the disastrous fire of 1666 was stayed.

It was a desolate sight which greeted the Londoners on Friday, September 7, when they surveyed the still smouldering ruins. Most of the Companies' halls had been destroyed, that of the Clothworkers was still burning, as oil had been stored in the cellars. Leadenhall was partly saved, but only the walls of the Guildhall still stood. An official estimate gave 13,200 houses, 89 parish churches, and St. Paul's as the sum total of the loss in buildings, and Pepys estimated

the rental value of the burnt houses at £600,000 a year.
His description of the desolation is very graphic. In a
walk of five or six miles he did not see " one loade of timber
unconsumed, nor many stones but what were calcined
white as snow." The lanes and by-streets were absolutely
filled up with rubbish, and he declared that you could not
get your bearings, unless it were for the occasional survival
of the tower or pinnacle of some well-known building.
The loss of life was small, but that of property was incal-
culable. The most serious artistic disaster was the de-
struction of St. Paul's with all its domestic buildings, and here
the fire broke out afresh some four days later when they
opened the crypt, which had been used by the booksellers
of the churchyard to store the sheets of unbound books.
These burst into flames when the air was let in. Some
fortunate survivals there were ; among secular buildings
Crosby Hall and Gresham House, among churches All
Hallow's, Barking, St. Olave's, those along the northern
fringe of the city, and St. Bartholomew's, but with all ex-
ceptions granted, it was the most severe disaster in the
annals of the city.

The natural instinct on all such occasions is to try to appor-
tion the blame, and very soon murmurs against Bludworth
were to be heard on all sides. " People do all the world over
cry out of the simplicity of my Lord Mayor in generall, and
more particularly in the business of the fire, laying it all
upon him." But though he was called to account for his
inefficiency at the end of his term of office, it was found
necessary to have another scapegoat, and this was ready to
hand in the Papists. It was an age when any evil was
believed of the Roman Catholics, for the days were at hand
when all England was to lose its head over the Popish Plot,
the child of the calculating brain of Titus Oates. What more
natural then than to believe that the fire had been set alight
by those who wished to destroy " the largest Protestant city
in the world." Though an official investigation declared
that the only attributable causes were " the hand of God, a

great wind and a very dry season," the belief was firmly held both in the city and in Parliament. Even the level-headed Pepys thought that " there is some kind of plot in this," and when the Monument was raised to commemorate the event, it bore an inscription accusing the Papists of causing the conflagration. Sir Patience Ward was Lord Mayor at the time, and though no more responsible than anyone else for the inscription, he brought on his head later the violent wrath of Thomas Ward, who in his "England's Reformation" wrote :

> *The sniffling Whig Mayor Patience Ward*
> *To this damned lie gave such accord,*
> *That he his godly masons sent*
> *T' engrave it round the Monument.*
> *They did so, but let such things pass—*
> *His men were fools, himself an ass.*

When James II ascended the throne the " damned lie " was naturally removed, but it was restored with gusto in 1689, and remained till 1830, when the Common Council, under the influence of Roman Catholic Emancipation, ordered its erasure. Thus it is no longer true to allude with Pope to :

> *. . . London's column pointing to the skies*
> *Like a tall bully rears its head and lies.*

The Londoners have ever had remarkable recuperative powers, and never was this more marked than in the present instance. There is something characteristic of the equable spirit of his fellow citizens as well as of his own personal vanity in Pepys' short entry in his diary : " Up betimes and shaved myself after a week's growth: but Lord! how ugly I was yesterday and how fine to-day ! " The embers were not cold when on September 6 a special court of Aldermen met to consider the steps to be taken to meet the emergency. A temporary home for the civic government was found at

Gresham House in Bishopsgate, whither all the officials were moved at once together with the records, which had fortunately been saved, and such books and papers as were in use. The garden was to be converted into the Exchange for the time being, and the East India Company was ordered to remove the pepper stored in the walks. Temporary sites were allotted for markets, and certain open spaces were set apart for the houseless to erect sheds and tents upon, under the supervision of duly appointed officials, the King being asked to send tents to assist in housing these destitute persons. The Companies were given the task of looking after their own poor, and help was procured from outside towards feeding the host of men, women, and children who had lost their all. The burning of London was a national event, and her helpless inhabitants were felt to be a responsibility on other towns in the kingdom. Thus York sent her Town Clerk to condole and present a sum of money "as much as this poore decayed city could furnish us with." The Irish Council wrote offering assistance, but as money was scarce, proposed to send cattle alive or dead, as preferred by the authorities. Londonderry expressed her sympathy with her "dear mother city," sending £250 to rebuild the houses of those who had built hers. In addition to these voluntary gifts the King ordered the Lieutenants of the counties to forward food to the city, especially bread and cheese. Having done something towards this part of the problem, the authorities proceeded to protect such property as survived. All plate, money, jewels, and household effects found among the ruins were to be taken to the Armoury in Finsbury Fields, and no property was to be yielded to any claimant until he had satisfied the officials of the genuineness of his assertions. The sites of churches were preserved from desecration, and such plate, vestments, and books as remained were to be carefully stored. The Guildhall was to be cleared of rubbish, and the melted lead, iron, and such materials were to be collected, while the passages leading to it were boarded up. All the streets and lanes were to be cleared,

and each householder was made responsible for the clearance of such portion as lay before his ruined house.

Activity such as this is a great testimony to London energy. The same spirit was shown in unofficial quarters. It was remarkable how quickly merchants and traders took steps to prevent any undue delay in their businesses. Foreign correspondents were notified, temporary places of business were opened, and the work of the city began again almost as soon as it had stopped. But nothing could hide the fearful blow that London had suffered. The glories of the city were hidden for the time being. No pageants celebrated Lord Mayor's Day, and there were many who, like Pepys, thought " with pite upon the poor city . . . compared with what it heretofore was." Nevertheless in the disaster were the seeds of a yet more glorious future. The fire had swept away the germs of the Plague as no mere human efforts could have done ; it destroyed the old polluted water-supplies and made the New River a necessity for all ; it cleared away the accumulations of the past and gave the citizens a chance to start afresh. The archæologist and the historian can mourn together the loss of many a glorious monument of the past, but there are compensations, and they may console themselves with the reflection that, had the fire spared, modern commercialism would have destroyed what was ornamental and historical but not useful.

CHAPTER X

THE NEW LONDON

In many ways it may be said that from 1666 dates the beginning of modern London; not that there is any real similarity between the overwhelming metropolis of to-day and the city which had just burst its walls in the seventeenth century, but at that date there arises not only new and more modern buildings on the old site, but new ideas begin to permeate the city, ideas which are the immediate ancestors of the social, economic, and political organization that we know to-day. From the point of view of town planning there was not so much difference between the new and the old London as might have been expected. To many, if not to all, it occurred that here was an opportunity to rebuild on a set plan. The King realized the situation, and having ordered the Lord Mayor to forbid any rebuilding till the possibilities of the situation had been considered with a view to endowing the city " with more decency and convenience than formerly," commissioned Wenceslas Hollar and Francis Sandford to make an exact survey of the site. As the result of this we have a map of London engraved by Hollar from the information collected, which helps us to estimate the full effects of the fire. The city employed Robert Hooke, " Reader of the Mathematicks in Gresham College," to perform a similar service, and he laid before the Common Council "an exquisite modell or draught " which received unstinted praise. Of this we have no record, but two rebuilding schemes have come down to us, both of which were seriously con-

sidered at the time. One was by the indefatigable and serious-minded diarist John Evelyn, and according to himself it won praise from the King and the Duke of York. Disregarding the fact that a portion of the city still stood, he filled up the space within the walls with rectangular lines, giving an effect remarkably like that of a chess-board with places marked for the various public offices, the only feature of note being the suggested levelling of the ground and the using of the rubbish to fill up the banks of the river, thus anticipating the Thames Embankment by two centuries. However, as Evelyn put it, " Dr. Wren has got the start of me," for this indefatigable mathematician, who had lately taken to architecture, had used his official position as an additional surveyor appointed to report on the city, to draw up a plan, almost as rectangular as that of Evelyn, though having many more features to recommend it. His idea was to make the Royal Exchange and Ludgate centres, from which there should be a series of streets running right through the city. St. Paul's was to be rebuilt with a colonnade all round it, something after the manner of an Italian town ; all narrow lanes were to be abolished, no street was to be less than thirty feet in breadth, and the whole was to be surrounded by a ring of cemeteries well planted with trees, which would serve both as recreation-grounds for the living and as resting-places for the dead. Neither of these plans was ever carried out, as it was found no time must be lost. The homeless were naturally very desirous to have a roof over their heads before the winter should come, and business men did not relish the idea of changing the sites of their offices and warehouses, so London was largely rebuilt upon its old foundations.

The abandonment of all new schemes for rebuilding in a way complicated the problems to be solved. The four sworn viewers, who were the regular officials for supervising all buildings in the city, found their hands more than full. Some of the old foundations were not strong enough for the newer and heavier type of houses that replaced the

old ones. There were constant disputes between landlord and tenant, and so complicated were these problems that a special court of judicature had to be set up by Act of Parliament to solve them. It may have been true, as Evelyn says, that " the King and Parliment are infinitely zealous for the rebuilding of our ruins," but it required a bribe of £100 to the Speaker to get this Bill through Parliament with sufficient speed. In addition to settling these questions, some kind of regulations had to be drawn up for the rebuilding. The civic authorities prepared a schedule of streets, some being enlarged, and in one case a new one being made so as to give the Guildhall direct access to Cheapside—the present King Street. Here again difficulties had to be met with regard to the owners of the property through which this new highway ran, one man demanding £700 in addition to being excused any payment "for the melioration of the rest of his ground." After negotiation he yielded the demand for the £700, but even then he secured a very fine " unearned increment." " So much," writes Pepys, "some will get by having the city burned. Ground by this means that was not 4d. a foot afore will now, when houses are built, be worth 15s. a foot." The only other town-planning on the part of the authorities was the allocation of market sites. Three principal ones were established for flesh and other victuals brought in from the country. Leadenhall was to serve the east, Honey Lane the centre, while Warwick Lane superseded the old Newgate market and was intended to provide for the western part of the city. Two other sites were given for herb and fruit markets, and yet another for fish. For all this work of construction money was sorely needed, and such small sums as had been received had been exhausted in relieving the immediate distress of the homeless. With some difficulty and more bribes Parliament was induced to pass an Act allowing a levy of 1s. on every chaldron of coals brought into the city, a levy raised to 2s. in 1670. Even then the authorities had to raise loans to the extent

of £83,000 and to allocate the fines payable by those who refused the office of Alderman towards the cost of the Guildhall. Still there was a great dearth of materials, and permission had to be asked for using five acres in St. Giles's Fields for the making of bricks and tiles, an application for Portland stone being refused, as the King wanted all he could get for his works on the palace at Whitehall.

Thus was the rebuilding of London inaugurated, a splendid opportunity for the architects of the time, one of whom made wonderful uses of it. Christopher Wren has left his mark for ever on modern London. In secular architecture he had keen competition with the city architect, Jarman, by whom the Royal Exchange and most of the Companies' halls were rebuilt, but he had no rival in the rebuilding of the London churches, and wherever you go in the London district, you will find evidences of his wonderful industry. He designed fifty churches in the city, he superintended Greenwich Hospital and the restoration of Westminster Abbey and Hampton Court; he built the Monument, Temple Bar, Marlborough House and Kensington Palace, to mention but a few of his works. He had only recently taken up architecture in 1666. By profession a mathematician, he had become Professor of Astronomy at Gresham College, where all through the recent political troubles he had been one of a band of scientists who, at the Restoration, blossomed into the Royal Society. Recently he had designed the chapel of Pembroke College, Cambridge, and he had already started on the Sheldonian Theatre at Oxford. Like Inigo Jones he felt the classical influence of the Renaissance, and at every turn he showed his contempt for " Gothic rudeness " as he described it. He had a fine disdain for all that was not massive and solid, for in his belief "a building certainly ought to have the attribute of the eternal." He poured scorn on the way the piers of old St. Paul's were filled with rubble and only faced with stone, but it is a strange commentary on this attitude that recent examinations have revealed a similar defect in the new cathedral

that he built. Doubtless much of his dislike of Gothic architecture was due to the fact that it was totally out of keeping with the ideas of his age, a fact most clearly illustrated in his ecclesiastical designs. Wren had not to translate the mystical piety of the Middle Ages, but the hard common sense of materialistic business men into stone. The Protestantism of seventeenth-century London was of a different temper from that of the Catholicism of the past. The religion of the mediæval Londoner had centred on the Sacraments, that of the seventeenth-century Londoner centred on the sermon. Hence Wren's churches were built not around the altar as in the past, but round the pulpit. They were not so much for the celebration of Mass as " very proper places for a large auditory," as he himself put it. It is impossible to examine all his work in the London area in relation to this conception, but perhaps we may take two examples of his churches as embodying his ideals—his smallest and his largest—St. Stephen's, Walbrook, and St. Paul's Cathedral. In the former we get what is a sort of trial for the great undertaking. It is throughout a beautiful piece of mathematical proportion. The dome is supported by sixteen Corinthian columns, which have their bases raised above the floor to the level of the tops of the pews, the removal of which tends perhaps to spoil the effect, for it makes the supports seem too slender for the comparatively massive roof. The building is almost square, there being no attempt at a chancel, and the altar being reduced to most insignificant proportions. Altogether it is a church ideal from the point of view of the listeners to an oration, but not so suited for the soul who seeks for spiritual communion with his God.

In St. Paul's we find the great monument of Wren's life and work. Even before the Fire he had been called in to advise on the restoration of the Cathedral, which was then in a ruinous condition. Tempest had destroyed the spire in 1561, its restoration had been undertaken by Inigo Jones, who had refaced a large part of the outside, giving it a

smooth and polished appearance, cut away the string
courses and some of the ornamental tracery of the windows,
and added his portico to the west end.   Since then it had
been much neglected, its images had been destroyed, and
the nave used as a cavalry barrack and stable during the
Commonwealth.   When consulted, Wren declared that the
cathedral was " ill designed and ill built from the begin-
ning," being indeed " such a heap of deformities that no
judicious architect will think it corrigible."   His idea was
to remodel it " after a good Roman manner," cutting off
the corners of the transepts and surmounting this with a
rotunda and dome.   Under these circumstances the Great
Fire was indeed a blessing in that it saved London from
such a deformity.   After the Fire it was thought for a time
that some portions of the old building could be retained,
but the fall of some of the masonry convinced Dean Sancroft
and the authorities that nothing short of a new building
was possible.   Wren was called in as the only possible
architect for such a building.   He first designed a church
in the form of a Greek cross, an exact evolution of the idea
embodied in St. Stephen's, Walbrook, a model of which can
be seen at the South Kensington Museum.   But both the
King and the ecclesiastics insisted on a Latin cross, and a
design was prepared and accepted, but immediately with-
drawn by the architect in favour of the plan on which St.
Paul's is now built.   On the whole Wren was given a fairly
free hand ; once the ground plan had been arranged, the
building proceeded without a check.   He had some difficulty
with the foundations, as he found he could not use the old
ones, and therefore the orientation had to be altered slightly,
which prevented the west front from facing direct down
Ludgate Hill.   The first stone was laid on June 21, 1675,
and the last stone of the cupola was set with solemn cere-
mony in 1710.   Opinion will ever differ as to the merits
of St. Paul's as an ecclesiastical building ; some will find in
it the most perfect embodiment of the religious spirit,
others will dismiss it as " too much like the mausoleum of

a millionaire Lord Mayor," as Mr. E. V. Lucas has done, but in any case it is a wonderful building. It is the only cathedral in Europe built from start to finish under the guidance of the same man, and so it is a true epitaph that is inscribed on Wren's grave in the crypt, " *Si monumentum requiris circumspice.*"

It seemed as though London, thus rebuilt, had been inspired with new life and energy, for it is from this time that we can trace the steady encroachment of the inhabited area over the fields that still lay around the city. The attempts to prevent the building of new houses by proclamation ceased in 1764, when it was realized that nothing could stop this expansion. It must be remembered that a large proportion of those who took advantage of this, at least towards the west, where the extension was most noticeable, were not regular Londoners living there all the year round. One of the reasons for forbidding the building of more houses had been the fear that country gentlemen would forsake their duties and become absorbed in the joys of town life, for at least one of these proclamations had bidden them remain at home " to perform the duties of their several charges, to be a comfort unto their neighbours, to renew and revive hospitality in their respective counties." Before the end of the seventeenth century houses for men of fashion were springing up in green fields which now became St. James's Square, Pall Mall, and Arlington Street. There is no doubt that this extension westwards was partly due to the fact that the Court was tending to move in that direction. Whitehall was particularly a Stuart Palace, and William III had no affection for it, nor did he appreciate the close proximity of the Londoners. He much preferred the far outlying palace of Hampton Court, built by Cardinal Wolsey, but ever since his fall a royal dwelling. He commissioned Wren to restore the fabric, and that architect did not hesitate to lay sacrilegious hands on a portion of the glorious Tudor workmanship, and construct a heavy classical façade on the garden side. But this residence being too

far from the seat of government for convenience, William purchased from the Earl of Nottingham an old mansion standing in twenty-six acres of ground in Kensington, " a patched-up building," Evelyn calls it. Fortunately this makeshift dwelling was almost completely burnt down in 1691, which gave an opportunity to the ubiquitous Wren, who made it more worthy of royalty, and in the Orangery produced what is regarded by some as his most successful achievement on a small scale. Whitehall did not long survive its desertion, for two successive fires, in 1691 and 1698, swept away almost all the haunts of Stuart gaiety, and enabled Evelyn to inscribe its epitaph in the usual curt style of his diary: " January 2, 1698. Whitehall burnt. Nothing but walls and ruins left."

It is obvious that most men did not realize the possibility of London's growth. Lord Burlington, for instance, when asked why he was building his house far out in the fields on the site in Piccadilly, now associated with his name, explained that he did so in order that it might never have houses beyond it. At first, it was but slowly that fashion worked westwards. In the reign of Anne, Bloomsbury Square, Lincoln's Inn Fields, and Soho Square were still the homes of the aristocracy, who however, by the time of George II, had occupied Leicester Fields and Golden Square, and had made Pall Mall a fashionable promenade. Before 1750 Hanover and Grosvenor Squares had become inhabited. At the end of the century Grosvenor Square extended close up to Hyde Park, while a few houses stood round what is now Hyde Park Corner, though most of the space between Grosvenor Square and Piccadilly was open ground. Along the bank of the river a thin line of houses extended from Westminster to the Horse Ferry opposite Lambeth. In other directions the growth was not so marked by the end of the eighteenth century. Southwark was developing towards Deptford on the south, and eastwards and northwards the well-to-do citizens were building houses in Bow, Stepney, and Hackney, though fields stil

divided them from the city.   London had started on her
mammoth growth, but no one could have realized what
another century would bring forth when she would become
not only the home of the merchant and the man of fashion,
but also of the great retired and of the artisans of the largest
manufacturing town in England.

Such a steady increase in size naturally demanded in-
creased organization, and on all sides there are evidences
of how new needs were arising and new methods were taking
the place of the old.   Thus in 1711 a London penny post
was established, and in 1722 a new water-system was
arranged to supply the West End, having its reservoir in
Hyde Park.   There was an ever-increasing need of better
locomotion, and the number of vehicles plying for hire was
largely increased.   The hackney coach was an invention
of the seventeenth century, hampered considerably by the
bad roads (which on one occasion were responsible for
throwing Evelyn's daughter out of her carriage as she drove
from Westminster into the city), but growing in numbers
as time went on.   In 1652 there were 200 such vehicles
licensed for hire ; in 1715 there were 800.   Another means
of locomotion, more convenient in many ways than the
hackney coach, was the sedan chair, of which 200 were
licensed in 1694, while the number had doubled in 1726.
A foreign traveller visiting London in 1724 noticed that
though in Paris, Brussels, Rome, and Vienna coaches could
only be hired by the day or hour, in London they stood
ready at almost every street corner.   The streets were be-
coming more and more crowded every year, and by the
middle of the eighteenth century the city authorities realized
that something must be done to remove the congestion.
Under an Act of 1755, the Corporation was empowered to
undertake works for the improving of the thoroughfares,
and in 1760 a committee was appointed by the Common
Council for the purpose of widening the streets.   Already
one great problem had been solved by covering in the River
Fleet, and converting it into a roadway such as it is at

present, but before this, vain attempts had been made to canalize it in accordance with the suggestions propounded by Wren in his scheme for rebuilding the city. Other streets were improved, but the most important work undertaken by the committee was the pulling down of the city gates, and with them went the remains of the old mediæval wall, thus for ever removing the idea of the compact, fortified city, and merging in one the old London within and the newer London without the walls. The disappearance of the gates was not a great archæological loss. Several of them, such as Ludgate, which was the first to go as traffic westwards was increasing rapidly, dated only from the Fire. Bishopsgate, though it escaped in 1666, had been still more recently rebuilt. Only one or two of the great seven gates contained more than traces of mediæval workmanship. A large part of the wall had gone in the Great Fire, but now that portion between Cripplegate and the Tower followed the rest. Some remains are to be found still. Above ground, there is a fine bastion in Cripplegate churchyard, and a long piece of wall in a warehouse near the Tower ; underground excavators still find traces of the old fortification. In the cellars of a new block in Crutched Friars known as London Wall House, there is a small portion of almost perfect Roman work, and quite recently there was disclosed another short stretch when the foundations of the new General Post Office were laid.

Yet another evidence of growing traffic was the tendency to throw new bridges across the Thames. In 1750 the first Westminster Bridge was opened, which helped to develop Lambeth as a residential district, though all through the ages there had been a ferry at this point. More important, perhaps, was the spanning of the river nearer the city where Blackfriars Bridge now stands. This was begun in 1710 and opened for traffic in 1769, a toll of $\frac{1}{2}d.$ on weekdays and 1d. on Sundays being exacted from pedestrians who crossed it, till riots in 1780 induced the Government to purchase the river bridges and throw them open to the

public toll free. This new bridge was first of all named
after Pitt, the great London hero of the period, the approach
to it for long being known as Chatham Place, and a tablet
recording the city's affection for the great statesman still
survives in the Guildhall. Finally the requirements of the
day dealt hardly with London Bridge, which ever since its
erection in the early twelfth century had been one of the
prides of the citizens. Like most mediæval bridges it had
houses along both sides; in the centre was the fortified
drawbridge, at the Southwark end stood the Bridge Gate.
On it too there still stood the remains of the chapel which
had been dedicated to St. Thomas Becket. The whole
structure was beautiful but impracticable, and many of the
houses were of no great antiquity, some only dating from
the reign of Queen Elizabeth. In 1754, therefore, an Act
of Parliament gave orders for clearing away the houses,
which were of no great value, as they reckoned things in
that commercial age, since they only brought in an annual
rental of £828 6s. a year. At the same time two piers
were taken away and a new arch thrown over the middle,
with the idea of diminishing the current as it rushed through
the narrow openings. All through the ages the passage
of London Bridge had been attended with danger, and
not a few disasters were connected therewith. Even with
the improvement of 1754, the hindrance to water traffic
was very serious, and in 1823 a new bridge was decided on.
In 1831 London Bridge as it stands to-day, 180 feet west of
the mediæval structure, was opened by King William and
Queen Adelaide. The substitution of five for twenty
arches had a distinct effect on the existing bridges higher
up, for old London Bridge had acted as a dam, and it was
soon found necessary to rebuild both Westminster and
Blackfriars bridges, a testimony to the superiority of twelfth-
century over eighteenth-century workmanship. Before
this both Waterloo and Southwark Bridges had been opened
in 1817 and 1819 respectively.

The new London, which was growing so rapidly during

the eighteenth century, was new in ideas as well as in shape.
Two examples of this only can be given, the one taken from
the materialistic, the other from the spiritual sphere.   In the
commercial world the chief development of the eighteenth
century was in finance, and the key to the situation here
was found in the establishment of the Bank of England.
Perhaps no event in the commercial history of London has
had such a far-reaching effect as this.   Banking, of course,
had been known in the city from the earliest days.   The
Jews from the Norman Conquest onwards had lent money,
while the monasteries performed the other banking function
of taking care of it.   With the ejection of the Jews the
Lombards came to the front ; and they added the third
function of transferring money from place to place.   In
the sixteenth century the London goldsmiths began to
usurp the monopoly in this kind of business enjoyed by the
hated Lombards, and they continued to do so all through
the seventeenth century.   Many of these goldsmiths' busi-
nesses were the ancestors of modern banks, such as Child's
and Hoare's, but they had not all the resources to meet
the frequent crises in the financial world, and houses like
the " Marygold " by Temple Bar, the " Unicorn " in Lom-
bard Street, or the " Golden Bottle " in Cheapside, fre-
quently had bad times when their existence hung in the
balance.   Such occurred when Charles I, on being refused a
loan by the city, seized £200,000 deposited by the goldsmiths
in the Tower for safe keeping; and again when in 1672
Clifford and Ashley evolved the scheme of " stopping the
Exchequer."   The goldsmiths had been induced to deposit
large sums in the Exchequer, both capital and interest
being secured by assignments on the national revenue.
Suddenly they were informed that they could not remove
their capital and that interest on it would not be paid for
a year at least.   Among the many failures in the panic
which ensued was Edward Backwell's famous business at
the " Unicorn."   Small wonder then that a promoter of
the Bank of England was able to argue that in thirty years

two or three millions had been lost in the failures of goldsmiths.

It was during the later Stuart period that Londoners began to talk of the necessity of a strong national bank, which by its impregnable position would give that financial security so necessary for the modern commercial world. The scheme did not materialize till 1694, when Parliament, to the surprise of all who knew the intense opposition aroused, allowed the subscribers to a new loan to be incorporated as the "Governor and Company of the Bank of England," with permission to carry on a banking business and to be the financial agents of the Crown. Those who disliked William III suspected that it was intended to bolster up the dynasty, economists feared that it might be used to raise unnecessary Government loans, while the goldsmiths looked on it as a serious rival. The bank had thus an immense amount of hostility to live down before it could be assured of absolute safety. William Paterson, of Darien scheme fame, was the "chief projector" of the scheme, but his name dropped out at once, and Michael Godfrey was, more than any one else, responsible for guiding the new venture through the troubled years of youth. Again and again attempts were made to ruin the institution. Jacobites and goldsmiths combined to collect large numbers of notes and present them for payment on the same day. There was a futile and bombastic attempt to float a rival concern in the Exeter Land Bank. But through many crises the Bank of England slowly worked its way, beginning in quite small quarters, but every year imparting a greater sense of financial security, upon which London based her ever-expanding commercial ventures. It was the Bank too which changed the character of the city from being a residential to being a purely business quarter. More and more, thanks to it, London became a financial centre, more and more her dwellings therefore became business houses, till in the end she earned her proud position of being the clearing-house of the world.

There is no doubt that some such steadying influence

as the Bank of England was needed in the London financial world, for the eighteenth century throughout was one of constant speculation, which occasionally developed into madness. The worst incident of this kind was connected with the promotion of the South Sea Company. Founded in 1711, this venture had for its object the development of trade in the Pacific, as it was believed that at the end of the war then proceeding with Spain and France, great concessions would be wrung from the already defeated enemy. As a matter of fact no such concessions were secured, but this did not prevent the South Sea Company from booming its shares, and for this purpose it induced the Government to concede to it the management of its financial business in preference to the Bank of England. New stock was issued, the Government concession was boomed for far more than it was worth, and the shares of the Company rose in an incredible time to an absurd figure. The office in Threadneedle Street was besieged by anxious buyers, so much so that clerks were placed at desks in the public streets, Change Alley was absolutely blocked, and Cornhill was quite impassable for horses and carriages. The scene is admirably described by Swift's satiric pen :

> *There stars and garters did appear*
> *Among the meaner rabble,*
> *To buy and sell, to see and hear*
> *The Jews and Gentiles squabble.*
> *The greater ladies hither came,*
> *And plied in chariots daily*
> *Or pawned their jewels for a sum*
> *To venture in the Alley.*

The Company was foolish though not quite unprincipled, but the same could not be said for other ventures floated in London to take advantage of the lust for speculation. These were a motley hoard, all over-capitalized and mostly dishonest, some few founded for quite sensible businesses, importing or exporting tobacco or making looking-glasses,

others for such projects as making quicksilver into metal, sawdust into good deal boards, or for discovering a wheel for perpetual motion. The inevitable crash came. The smaller and more fraudulent companies collapsed, the greater ones followed, and the South Sea Company went the way of the rest. " Thousands of families will be reduced to beggary. Consternation is inexpressible, the rage beyond description, and the case altogether so desperate that I do not see any plan or scheme so much as thought of for averting the blow." Thus wrote a Member of Parliament to the Lord Chancellor, and truly the case was desperate. Something was done by the Government, but it could only temper the disaster. In such a crisis the stability of the Bank of England was both a national and a civic asset ! " London (so considerable a part of the kingdom) was filled with numberless objects of grief and compassion," but still the main foundations of her financial stability were not undermined. The new finance might bring ruin to thousands of innocent persons, but it had come to stay, and to be the very life-blood of the city.

In the spiritual world the great development of the eighteenth century was the religious revival associated with the name of John Wesley. This great revivalist preacher made his influence felt in London perhaps more than anywhere else. Very soon he had a large following not only in the city but also in the West End. In the city his headquarters were at the " Foundry " in Moorfields, which in 1738 he bought and converted into a chapel. Hard by he lived; he was buried in the cemetary behind, and to this day his statue presides over the wayfarers of City Road. In the west his chief chapel was in Seven Dials, near where Cambridge Circus now is, and so great was the throng that three Communion Services had to be held in succession. Associated with Wesley at first, but afterwards developing a line of his own, George Whitefield also preached and taught in the highways and byways of London, finally establishing his headquarters at the Tabernacle in Tottenham Court

Road. The preaching of Wesley and Whitefield came at a time when a religious revival was long overdue in London. The carelessness with regard to religion was even more marked there than elsewhere, and there is no doubt that the Methodist movement, and the other developments which sprang from it, turned men from the almost purely material-istic outlook to which they had grown accustomed. This reaction is to be traced in the charitable institutions which were founded during the period. At least three great London Hospitals take their origin in the middle of the eighteenth century. The Foundling Hospital, it is true, was originally started by "certain worthy merchants in the reign of Queen Anne" for bringing up and teaching honest trades to helpless children who had been abandoned by their parents, but it failed to receive any support till taken up by a retired merchant captain named Coram. In 1739 he bought the site and built the hospital as it now stands in Guilford Street, and from that time forward it became one of the leading institutions of London. In addition to these, two hospitals for the sick date from this time. Thomas Guy, who kept a bookseller's shop at the corner of Lombard Street and Cornhill, used his proximity to the financial world to such good purpose that he was one of the fortunate ones who, by selling out at the right time, made fortunes out of the South Sea Bubble. This wealth he dedicated to founding the hospital which still bears his name in Southwark. The year 1740 saw the beginning of the London Hospital, planted in what was then a desolate district, so separated from London that the famous physician Sir William Blizard always rode armed when he went to visit it. Perhaps the organization of all this charity was not so kindly and considerate as at the present day. For long the patients in the London Hospital were referred to in the minutes as "objects" or "miserable objects." They slept two in a bed, were not provided with towels and soap till 1789, and were all expected to wash at the common pump. But the hospital can boast that it was the first to

start a medical school in connexion with its work in 1783, an example shortly followed by St. Bartholomew's.

Yet another direction in which the growing moral sense of London showed itself was in the treatment of prisoners. The London prisons were in a deplorable condition. Some were mere taverns such as the Tower Hamlets Gaol, which was housed " at a public house, kept by an honest Swede," as Howard reported. In these places, where all classes were to be found, most of them imprisoned for debt, the rich fared sumptuously while the poor could not come by a bed and had to exist on a precarious loaf of bread and poisonous water. In the more regular prisons, where serious criminals were incarcerated, the conditions were just as bad, and even the newly rebuilt Newgate, the first stone of which was laid in 1770, was condemned by Howard. It was this John Howard, a native of Hackney, who was the hero of the prison reform movement. He travelled about obtaining comparative statistics, and he did much to improve the lot of the unfortunate prisoners. Some attempt was made to secure more cleanly conditions, and to stamp out the gaol fever, which at the assizes of 1750 carried off the Lord Mayor, two judges, three aldermen, the under-sheriff and several minor officials. His work was carried on by James Nield, who complained of the brutality shown to the condemned. Finally this period of moral revival was crowned by the work of Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, who not only managed to relieve the lot of the prisoners, but also introduced more humane ideas as to the nursing of the sick.

It is therefore possible to trace all the elements of modern London in the new city as it developed after the Great Fire of 1666. In topography she was expanding as never before, in commerce and finance she was leading the way, and at the same time a realization of responsibility to one's fellows, based on a quickening religious spirit, had appeared to touch with tenderness what otherwise would have been an age of unlovely materialism.

CHAPTER XI

A WHIG STRONGHOLD

Social and economic questions were not the only subjects about which the Londoners showed progress in ideas after the new city and town had begun to develop. From 1666 onwards, the city became more and more the home of progressive political thought, and this arose largely from the fact that the citizens were staunch Protestants. The religious question it was which had chiefly inspired the citizens in their opposition to Charles I, so also it was a cleavage on this point which roused them against the later Stuarts, and made them through the eighteenth century the reforming wing of the Whig party. In the very first election held after the Restoration this fact became clear, for in the city it was fought as between Protestant Nonconformists and Episcopalians, and as a result the latter " went away cursing and swearing and wishing they had never come," as a contemporary newsletter writer reported, for of the four members returned, two were Congregationalists, one a Presbyterian, and one " not much noted for religion, but a countenancer of good ministers." This result was considered most unfortunate by the Government, for, as Pepys put it, " a precedent is given to the whole country," and it went so far as to tamper with letters in the post, so as to delay the news of its defeat in reaching distant parts. The die was cast, and henceforth the city and the Stuarts looked askance at one another. Charles II did not hesitate to interfere considerably in civic elections, and he even managed the removal of two aldermen of whom he did

not approve. But the great struggle did not come till London Protestantism was aroused by the burning question of the Exclusion Bill, designed to exclude James Duke of York from the throne, on the ground that he was a Roman Catholic. The citizens had not got over their excitement at the supposed Popish plot, which had caused them to shut their gates, stretch chains across the streets, and establish an armed watch both night and day, and they now petitioned the King to facilitate the passing of the Bill. Again and again they returned to the charge, and when Parliament was prorogued to prevent the passing of the Bill, they protested vigorously, recounting all their past efforts to maintain the Protestant faith. Further, they instructed their members to grant no money till London was safe from Popery and arbitrary power. Thus it was evident that the religious and political questions were closely interwoven.

The invariable answer made by Charles II to all petitions was that his petitioners should mind their own business, and he did his utmost to quench the strong opposition of his capital. In more ways than one, he imitated the policy of Richard II. He organized his own party in the city under Sir John Moore, who secured the mayoral chair, he tried to get the nomination of the sheriffs into his hands, and finally he declared war on the civic liberties. From the first he had been anxious to avoid renewing the city's charter, having delayed its confirmation till three years after his restoration, and now by writs of *quo warranto* he demanded proof of the citizens' rights to be a body corporate, to have and elect the Sheriffs of London and Middlesex, and to claim the jurisdiction of Justices of the Peace for their Lord Mayor and Aldermen. When the case came up for trial, the Attorney-General argued more as a political than as a legal advocate. He said that the King meant no harm by London, which had always been best governed when the King had " taken the city into his hands," but that recent petitions to the Crown had been seditious, and

had forfeited the corporate rights of the citizens. The
Recorder on the other side pleaded that a corporation could
not lose by misdeeds its right to be a corporation, and that
if wrong had been done, an action lay against individuals
who represented the city, not the city as a whole.   Judg-
ment was not delivered for three months, in the hope
perhaps that London would give in and surrender her
liberties, as Norwich and Evesham had done, but in the end
it was decided that the Corporation could be legally seized
by the Crown for seditious petitions.   For a time it seemed
as though a compromise might be arrived at, terms indeed
were drawn up, but in the end the Common Council decided
to face the matter out, and in 1683, for the last time, the city
was "taken into the King's hands."   Thus Charles captured
the civic organization, and he proceeded to do the same with
the Companies, who were compelled to surrender their
charters and agree to their Wardens being removable at the
King's pleasure.

It was during this struggle that the parties of Whig and
Tory definitely appeared in the city, which naturally tended
to be largely Whig in opposition to royal interference.   An
additional reason offered when James II ascended the
throne, and betrayed his policy of favouring Roman Catholics.
The Protestantism of London was aroused, the more so as
hundreds of refugee Huguenots were at the time finding an
asylum in the city, having been driven from France by the
revocation of the Edict of Nantes.   Settling chiefly in
Spitalfields, they there developed the silk industry, which
was soon taken up by the natives, and made this district
the most famous silk-producing place in England.   The
cry of oppressed Protestantism made the Londoners all the
more bitter against Roman Catholicism.   They seized every
opportunity to show contempt for the King's religion,
they sacked chapels, insulted the crucifix, and mobbed the
priests.   They took the Declaration of Indulgence as a
direct attack on Protestantism, and such was the feeling
that it was read in only four London churches, in one after

the congregation had gone out. It was therefore with joy that the acquittal of the seven bishops was greeted, and even the restoration of their civic liberties did not prevent the citizens as a body from rejoicing at the fall of James II.

It is not wonderful that London ever thereafter looked back to Stuart days with horror and dislike. Not that she found much delight in the unsympathetic character of William III, but she remembered that it was with his advent that the *quo warranto* proceedings of Charles II were declared illegal, and that her civic privileges were restored in full. Party feeling continued in the city, and it appeared even in commercial matters, notably in the long struggle between the East India Company, which, thanks to the interference of Charles II, had become a Tory body, and the new East India Company, a Whig enterprise which challenged the monopoly of Indian trade claimed by its rival. On the whole throughout the eighteenth century the Tory party was very weak in the city; only once indeed was it able to assert itself, and that for but a brief moment. In the reign of Anne affection for the Queen and a slight religious revival on High Church lines led certain citizens and the mob to attack Whig ministers. London had supported the wars with France which William III had started ; during Anne's reign, she had punctiliously celebrated the great victories of Marlborough as each occurred, but she was getting tired of a struggle which seemed to be carried on for the benefit and glory of the great general and no one else. The chance for a demonstration against the Government came when a certain totally un-distinguished but somewhat fluent clergyman named Dr. Sacheverell was prosecuted for high treason, because he had attacked the Government in a sermon wherein Godolphin was likened to Jeroboam the son of Nebat who made Israel to sin. The responsible authorities were by no means inclined to support Sacheverell, and the Court of Aldermen had refused to publish the offending sermon, though preached before the Lord Mayor on an official occasion, which generally

meant publication at the city's expense. But the mob
and many men of repute joined in acclaiming the accused
doctor as a hero, supported him vociferously as he journeyed
to Westminster Hall to be tried, and rejoiced when he
received only nominal punishment. Riots broke out in
the city that night, Nonconformist chapels were burnt, and
the people generally showed their joy at the Tory triumph
when the ministry was dismissed by the Queen. This demon-
stration, purely Tory though it may seem on the surface,
was probably assisted by far different motives. It was
noticed that republican pamphlets appeared in the streets
during the disturbances, and so the Whig government of the
city hastened to make its position quite clear. It addressed
the Queen, expressing its hatred of all " anti-monarchical
principles," its loyalty to her and the Church, and its reso-
lution to maintain the Protestant succession. In other
words it was Whig, standing by the principles of the Revolu-
tion, and hostile to all demonstrations of High Tory feeling,
though quite loyal to Queen Anne.

The political attitude of the city can almost invariably
be ascribed at every juncture to trade considerations, and this
is true in the eighteenth century. The Whig party was
essentially the party of the merchant as well as of the
Protestant Nonconformists, and opposed all concessions to
the landed interest, such as characterized the short period
of Tory rule under Anne. It was the party which dreaded
the return of despotism and Roman Catholic domination,
which the Pretenders represented, and so the Londoners
were ever among those who rallied loyally to the Hanoverian
dynasty when it was threatened by invasion. In 1715,
though there were some Jacobite demonstrations by irre-
sponsible persons, the city authorities stood firm, sup-
pressed all discontent, and in a loyal address took to them-
selves the credit of having helped to bring in the Hanoverian
line. By 1745, the previous traces of Jacobitism had
entirely disappeared, and Londoners of all classes and
creeds joined together to hold the city for the King. There

was genuine consternation when it was known that Prince Charlie had arrived at Derby, and the day when the news arrived was long remembered as Black Friday in the city's annals. Practically nothing lay between the capital and the invaders. True, the guards were encamped at Finchley, but if we are to accept Hogarth's picture of their march thither as in any way correct, they were not much of a barrier to even the undisciplined force which the Pretender commanded. The city would have to rely on her Trained Bands, the volunteers who marched to arms at the call of danger. When the tension was relaxed, the city showed its relief by voting its freedom to the Duke of Cumberland for averting the danger, and for his "magnanimous" treatment of the rebels, though there were some whose sense of humour was not entirely quenched by the recent crisis, and suggested that the victorious general, in view of his notorious brutality to the vanquished, should on taking up the freedom of the city be enrolled in the Butchers' Company.

This loyalty to the existing government in 1745 is explained not only by the known hostility to the Stuarts, but also by the era of great prosperity which the administration of Walpole—the greatest of the Whigs—had brought to the city. His policy of peace and retrenchment had helped to foster trade, and his popularity in London only waned when it was felt that some commercial interest was threatened. Thus his famous Excise scheme was doomed to failure by the uncompromising attitude both of the responsible citizens as represented by their Parliamentary members, and of the mob. There was also at work the other influence which we can trace all through this period, the fear of any infringement of the liberty of the subject. That customs dues should be levied in a man's own shop, which was still generally his dwelling, seemed to smack of interference such as had caused the resentment against the picketing of soldiers in the days of Charles I. The cry "No slavery, no excise, no wooden shoes," which was put into the mouths of the

mob, represented both a commercial and a political opposition. It was a commercial reason, too, which won London's support for the series of great wars which strained England's resources from the fall of Walpole right down to 1815. It was indeed London that was most responsible for the inauguration of this period by the declaration of war with Spain in 1739. English merchants had for long suffered much interference from Spain on the high seas, chiefly because they insisted on unlicensed traffic with South America, and when Captain Jenkins came along with his story of an ear cut off by a Spanish officer, the Londoners swallowed it whole and clamoured for war, telling Parliament that their trade would become precarious indeed if it were to depend on the justice of Spain, and emphasizing " the fatal consequences of leaving the freedom of navigation any longer in suspense and uncertainty." Undoubtedly these wars helped to enlarge the horizon of London commerce, for they did much towards building up the British Empire, and London's purse was ever opened to provide funds for the continuation of the struggle. The elder Pitt, though no Whig at heart, became the beloved hero of the city as the great " organizer of victory," and he in his turn paid generous tribute to the prominent part played by London in making his policy a success. " It will ever be remembered to the glory of London, that through the whole course of this arduous war, that great seat of commerce has generously set the illustrious example of steady zeal for the dignity of the Crown and of unshaken firmness and magnanimity." No less loyal was the support that Pitt's son received when he had to face the war with the forces of the French Revolution and later with Napoleon. Though there were frequent grumbles at hard times, though the poor cried again and again " Peace ! Peace ! Bread ! Bread ! " the authorities rallied to the Government, and merchants were ever ready to assist in what they considered the protection of English trade. Thus when Pitt wanted a loan of £18,000,000 in 1796, the whole sum was subscribed in the city in fifteen

hours, and at the same time the rank and file, who could not send money, gladly volunteered for military service in case of invasion, so that a force of 300,000 men could have been mustered in the city if need were.

But this necessity for defence did not blind the Londoners to the fact that there was much to be done in reorganization at home. Reform was in the air all through the latter part of the 18th century, and the city did not forget her Whig principles. London public opinion on the question of Reform is revealed in the attitude of the various groups of her citizens towards that political firebrand who, despite his many faults, was a true champion of liberty. John Wilkes was the son of a worthy wine merchant of Clerkenwell Square, who, having run through his own patrimony and that of his wife, looked round for some means of replenishing his depleted exchequer. He was a man of no morals and fewer scruples, whose character is well expressed in his reply to inquiries in France as to how far an Englishman could go in abuse of the royal family. " I don't know, but I am trying to find out." Ugly to the verge of repulsion, possessed of a squint which would alarm any nervous person, he was none the less gifted with a fascination which overcame the prejudices of that staunch Tory Dr. Johnson. Even George III, who hated him and all his ways, and loathed all representatives of the city—" fellows in fur " as he described the Aldermen—had to confess, when Wilkes became Chief Magistrate of the city, that he had never had to do with such a well-bred Lord Mayor. This enormous asset stood him in good stead when he determined to champion the cause of liberty, as a means of attacking the Government with a view to obtaining some fat office as the price of his silence. George III had roused London Whiggism to stern opposition by his attempt to assert himself through the band of " King's friends " which he organized to control Parliament. There was therefore a strong public opinion in the city ready to champion anyone who dared to tilt against this revival of royal prerogative under the far

less odious guise of influence, as Burke described it. It was Wilkes's good fortune to be able to raise three great questions on which this public opinion was ready to support him: the liberty of the subject, the right of electors to choose their representative in Parliament without interference, and the liberty of the Press.

The question of the liberty of the subject arose when Wilkes was arrested for strictures on the King's speech on proroguing Parliament, made in No. 45 of the *North Briton*, a paper of which he was editor. Such an action was at once taken by the Londoners to be a violation of liberty, in that it suggested that all criticism on the Government was a criminal libel. Wilkes's lawyers fought the question on the point that the arrest had been made on a general warrant, which named no particular individual but merely all those persons connected with writing and publishing the offending issue, and Chief Justice Pratt declared such a warrant to be illegal and discharged the prisoner. Very wroth at this, Parliament, which was entirely dominated by the corrupt influence of the King, ordered the city Sheriffs forthwith to burn No. 45 as a false, scandalous, and malicious libel. The carrying out of this command was attended with great difficulty. The mob, up in arms against the Government, assailed the unfortunate Sheriffs, who, the wood having been watered, could only effect their purpose by one of them holding a torch while the common hangman held the document to the flames. But it was not merely the mob which showed its feelings. The Lord Mayor refused to have any part in the proceedings, and the Common Council supported his action and condemned the Sheriffs, though only by a narrow majority. Soon after, the authorities manifested their opinion by granting the freedom of the city to Pratt, and by hanging his portrait by Reynolds in the Guildhall and underneath it the inscription: "The jealous assertor of English liberty by law." So ostentatiously hostile to the existing methods of government were the more responsible citizens, that the

Duke of Bedford declared from his place in the Lords that
" such behaviour in a smaller town would have forfeited
their franchise. The Common Council have long been
setting themselves up against the Parliament." With
venomous spite, the Government sought other means of
attacking the man who had defied them, and for this purpose
they got hold of a skit composed by Wilkes on Pope's
" Essay on Man " entitled " An Essay on Woman." The
gross immorality of this production was remarkable, even
in that coarse age, but it had never been published, and
if so, it had nothing to do with its author's public life. The
very fact that the motion condemning it in the House of
Lords was entrusted to Lord Sandwich—the most notorious
evil liver of his day—shows that it was not its scandalous
character, but the fact that its author was Wilkes, that
caused it to be attacked. Wilkes was summoned before
Parliament, but had taken refuge in France, and so, unheard,
he was expelled from the Commons and proceedings in the
Court of King's Bench resulted in his outlawry, as he did not
put in an appearance. The whole situation has in it the
elements of comic opera, but behind it there was a great
principle at stake—could Parliament act in an autocratic
manner and expel a duly elected member ?

This point was carried further when Wilkes, defying his
outlawry, came back and stood as a candidate in the election
of 1768 for the city of London. The fact that he failed to
win the seat implies that there were still many who could
not bring themselves to support so scandalous a character,
though so strong was the feeling in London against the
arbitrary conduct of the Government that Franklin ex-
pressed the belief that had Wilkes started his campaign
earlier he would have been successful. Nothing daunted, he
put up for Middlesex, and was returned at the top of the poll.
If the Government had been wise, it would have let the matter
rest. But George III was both stupid and obstinate. He
saw that Wilkes was now more popular than ever, as he had
voluntarily surrendered for judgment on his outlawry and,

though discharged on this point, had been rearrested and condemned to a fine of £1000 and twenty-two months' imprisonment for blasphemous libel. He therefore insisted that the Commons should once more expel Wilkes and order a new election, an action which practically denied to constituents the right to elect whom they pleased. Three times was Wilkes elected, and three times was he expelled by Parliament, and finally his defeated opponent was declared elected. The protests at this autocratic behaviour of a body supposed to represent the nation were universal in London. The mob got entirely out of hand, and during the first election at any rate absolutely terrorized all who would not huzzah for " Wilkes and Liberty," or agree to wear the blue cockade with No. 45 on it, which was the popular badge. The windows of all those who were suspected of hostility to Wilkes were broken ; even the Mansion House did not escape, as the Lord Mayor of the year was numbered among these. The dignified Austrian Ambassador was dragged out of his coach and made to submit to having " 45 " chalked on the soles of his feet. After the declaration of Wilkes's success at the poll, " for two nights London was illuminated at the command of the mob. The second night exceeded anything of the kind ever seen here on the greatest occasion of rejoicing, as even the small cross streets, lanes, courts, and other out-of-the-way places were all ablaze with lights, and the principal streets all night long, as the mob went round after two o'clock and obliged people who had extinguished their candles to light them again. Those who refused had all their windows destroyed." Such was Franklin's experience, and even more serious were the riots round the King's Bench prison in St. George's Fields, Southwark, where the soldiers had to fire on the mob.

Among more responsible citizens there was much the same feeling, though there was not the same enthusiasm for the character and methods of Wilkes. A petition was drawn up for presentation to the King, in which the ministers of the Crown were charged with peculation, with seizing

persons and papers unlawfully, and with taking away
the rights of electors to choose their Members of Parliament.
Again, when Beckford, a time-honoured servant of the city,
had been elected Lord Mayor, another petition was presented,
about which Horace Walpole wrote—" a bolder declaration
both against King and Parliament was never seen." Parlia-
ment was described as an illegal body because one of its
members sat without right, and the Commons were con-
demned for being " corruptly subservient " to ministers.
There were, it is true, some who hesitated at this freedom
of speech, the majority of the Court of Aldermen did not like
it, the Grocers' Company disassociated themselves from
the whole thing, but the large majority of citizens sup-
ported the bold action of the officials. Beckford indeed
may have thought the language of the petition a little strong,
and in another interview with the King he thought well,
while not receding from his position, to justify the attitude
of the city, assuring George III that none were " more
faithful, more dutiful, or more affectionate " to his person
than the Londoners in a speech which was universally
praised, even Horace Walpole describing it as " loyal and
respectful."

Thus the city had definitely taken sides on a question
which was to become merged in general parliamentary
reform, and at the same time it had accepted the irrepres-
sible Wilkes as one of its officials. While still in prison he
had been elected Alderman for the Ward of Farringdon With-
out, and though the Court of Aldermen had ordered a second
election, it decided to accept him when again returned by
the electors, thus showing a good example to the Commons.
In office, Wilkes was in a far more subdued mood, though
he still sought an opportunity to stand forth as the champion
of liberty. He found one in the relations of Parliament
with the Press. London newspapers had been increasing in
numbers and importance throughout the century. In 1724
there were three daily papers in London and five weekly ones,
while ten appeared three times a week. In 1777 there were

seventeen papers in all, no less than seven being daily ones, three of these of recent foundation being the *Morning Chronicle*, the *Morning Post* and the *Morning Herald*, which all lasted long after the Reform Bill of 1832. In addition to these there were numerous periodical publications, including three literary reviews and the *Gentleman's Magazine*, founded in 1731. It had long been the custom to give reports of the debates in Parliament in these publications, though they were only based on hearsay and were forbidden by the regulations of both Houses. Wilkes induced some of the printers to challenge the privilege claimed by Parliament in this matter by publishing the full names of the speakers instead of disguising them as heretofore. The House of Commons accepted the challenge, and sent to arrest the printers, but Wilkes, sitting as Justice of the Peace in his capacity of Alderman, refused to accept the arrest as lawful, since the warrant had not been backed by an Alderman. Next day Lord Mayor Brass Crosby and Alderman Oliver took up the matter, and soon a very bitter struggle began between the House and the Aldermen. Both Crosby and Oliver were Members of Parliament, and as such were summoned to the Bar of the House to answer for their conduct. Wilkes offered to go, too, as rightful member for Middlesex, but this was ignored. He was quietly shouldered out of the matter by his more sober colleagues, who paid for their temerity by being imprisoned in the Tower by order of the House till the adjournment of Parliament automatically set them at liberty. The point at issue was really the same as before. The objection to reporting debates was, that Members of Parliament became more dependent on their constituents, who thereby knew how those men for whom they voted acted ; it was again the question whether Parliament was to be an autocratic body under the control of the King, or a really representative assembly. The mob once more supported the opponents of the Government, and while Crosby and Oliver were in the Tower, Bute and other leaders were executed in effigy on Tower Hill by a chimney sweep, but

the great mob leader Wilkes had lost much of his power. Oliver showed him plainly that he desired no association with him, and though Wilkes lived to be Sheriff and even Lord Mayor, his days as an agitator were over.

Almost at the same moment that London was protesting against interference with the Press, there arose another burning question in which she took great interest. The American colonies were on the verge of open revolt against what they considered to be undue interference on the part of the Home Government. The Londoners were the first to protest to the King at the action of his ministers, which was "big with all consequences which can alarm a free and commercial people." The twofold reason for their attitude is concisely summed up in this short sentence. On the one hand they dreaded the interruption to their trade which a war with the colonies would bring about; on the other they looked on the claim of the English Parliament to levy taxes on the colonies without their consent as part of the same policy which disfranchised the Middlesex voters, and forbade the reporting of debates. They sympathized with the constitutional cry "No taxation without representation," and told the King roundly that his ministers' policy was one of pure despotism, and that they were only enabled to carry it out because members of the Commons were "notoriously bribed to betray their constituents and their country." This was the official attitude of the city all through the war, though when France joined the rebels, it was slightly modified. Nevertheless when it became evident that peace must be made and the independence of the colonies recognized, it was London again who led public opinion in this direction.

Such being the general attitude of the citizens towards the Government of the day, it may well be understood that they were advocates of Parliamentary reform. This move-ment had long been canvassed in the city, and it found organized support when in 1780 a "Committee of Associa-tion" was formed in London, on the lines of one already

existing in Yorkshire. Its programme was one of cutting down public expenditure, the shortening of parliaments and a greater equalization of parliamentary representation. The question of rotten boroughs which, despite an electorate of only half a dozen persons, returned two Members to Parliament, does not seem to have attracted the attention of the Londoners nearly so much as the argument in favour of shorter parliaments, the reason for this latter demand being a hope that it would diminish corruption if it were no longer possible to buy a man's vote in the House for a period of seven years. Towards the end of the century the agitation for parliamentary reform died down in the city, as in England generally, since the French Revolution alarmed moderate reformers, and the country was compelled to devote all its energies to the war which resulted on French aggression. The return of peace saw the revival of London's now habitual policy of reform, and as the goal came nearer and nearer, so did the enthusiasm of the citizens rise. The Court of Aldermen, corresponding in a way to the House of Lords in the national constitution, was hostile to all change, but the Common Council was as anxious as ever to overthrow " a faction arrayed in hostility to the liberties of the country and seeking to maintain itself in the usurpation of a power unknown to the Constitution." When the first Reform Bill was thrown out in 1831, public opinion was shown in the way the London papers came out with black edges in token of mourning, and great were the rejoicings in the city when the Bill of 1832 was passed. It was no mere empty tribute when Lord Grey spoke of London's traditional love of freedom, " never more conspicuously manifested " than in her support of Parliamentary reform.

All through the eighteenth century and down to quite modern days, London was the home of progressive ideas. Her inheritance of hostility to the Stuarts led her to become Whig, and having adopted this political creed, she was more

than faithful to it. A rabble maddened with drink might bring discredit on the cry " Wilkes and Liberty," but the sober-minded citizens were not shaken in their faith. Through storm and tribulation, through good report and ill, London ever led public opinion on towards reform.

CHAPTER XII

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LONDON

It is a matter not without significance that London appears to have attracted the foreigner less in the eighteenth century than at any other time in her existence. "It seems to me," wrote Montesquieu when recalling his visit in 1730, "that Paris is a beautiful city with some ugly things; London an ugly city with some beautiful things." The gloom of the climate was to him an adequate explanation why the English were so addicted to suicide, an opinion shared by Voltaire some years later. The truth is that the spirit of the inhabitants was less gay and irresponsible than formerly. London, far earlier than any other European capital, felt the effects of the Industrial Revolution, and it had become more than ever a great centre of mercantile and also of manufacturing activity. The great upheaval in economic conditions brought about a similar change in social organization, which entailed much suffering and consequent discontent. Seething with life, big with the possibilities of the future, London was nevertheless passing through an anxious time in preparing for the modern world. There was no longer that cohesive element which had for ten centuries at least made Londoners patriotic to their city as well as to their nation. The population was not only beginning to spread, it was dividing up into classes, each with its own peculiar haunts. The development of the West End as a home of fashion was topographical evidence of a change of spirit. The men who gave their names to Cavendish, Grosvenor, and Portman Squares were not Londoners in the old accepted

sense of the word. A great social division was growing up between the City and the East End on the one side, and the West End on the other, between which were the lawyers in their Inns of Court and Chancery, who belonged to neither division. It is said that the South Sea Bubble marks the time when this division became most apparent, that, having burnt their fingers in this gamble, the nobility and gentry forswore the city and all its ways ; be this as it may, as the century wore on, London began to reflect more and more that spirit of snobbery which was becoming so characteristic of the nation at large. A gulf unbridged separated the city merchant from the leisured classes of the West End. No longer could it be said that the London trader was recruited from the ranks of the country gentry. Trade, it was supposed, was a defiling thing, and the well-born must not soil his hands with it. And so as London finally burst her bonds and began to flood the vast district now covered by town houses, there arose social and class divisions, which continue, though in a modified form, to the present day.

It is therefore necessary to study London life in this period in separate circles, for there was next to nothing in common between the lives of the various classes. No longer did rich and poor meet in common sports and common places of amusement. Everything was henceforth in watertight compartments. The West End man of fashion led a life of aimless pleasure. He frequented his club and the playhouse, drank deep, fought duels and showed as a rule a callous disregard for those whose lot it was to earn their living by the sweat of their brow or to starve neglected and forgotten. The city tradesman was brought far nearer to the realities of life. As a rule he was in a small way—in a very small way as things are reckoned now—lived over his shop and had to be very careful with whom he dealt, for one or two defaulters might land him in the debtors' prison. All the morning he worked with his apprentices and assistants in the shop, but in the afternoon he would dress himself in his best, and standing outside, invite customers to enter

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and sample his wares. In social intercourse he was formal and polite. Bows and curtseys were as much the order of the day in the parlours of the city as in the drawing-rooms of the West End, and it was fashionable in these circles for the men to greet the ladies with a kiss, a fashion which delighted foreign visitors, particularly impressionable Frenchmen. As a practical man he betrayed the still traditional contempt of Englishmen for all education that could not be translated into financial terms ; his sons were instructed in the three R's till about the age of fourteen they entered their father's or some kindred business, while the girls were taught deportment and housewifery. The city schools were of a very primitive kind, being generally kept by some man who had failed in all other professions, and the young ladies' academies being as often as not the speculation of some adventurous ex-lady's maid. The tradesman was again in a very different class from that of the craftsman. The distinction between trade and craft had been growing in London ever since the fifteenth century, and now it was very unusual to find the two carried on together, though in such trades as the horse-milliner or saddler the goods were still made and sold in the same shop. As a rule, in the eighteenth century London manufacture was not in the hands of the large capitalist, as it was growing to be in the country. Indeed, London was not as it is to-day, the largest manufacturing town in England. The craftsman generally worked for some master in a small way of business who was a working craftsman himself. His wages as a rule did not exceed 15s. a week, though in the best-paid employments they might rise to 24s. For this he worked long hours, starting at six or seven in the morning and ending at eight o'clock at night, with no Saturday half-holidays or Bank Holidays to relieve the tedium. The workshops were small and in some cases used as living-rooms as well, for there was very little machinery driven by power in the London of this age. We have a picture of a weaver's workroom in one of Hogarth's paintings, where we get an impression of a badly lit apart-

ment with grimy walls, but the men fairly cheerful, singing at their work. Franklin, who worked for a printer in Lincoln's Inn Fields, was struck most by the amount of beer consumed by his fellows, who thought nothing of drinking six pints in the day.

Throughout the century there was considerable unrest in the labour world, due partly to low wages, but aggravated by the steady rise of prices. The constant wars interfered with trade and made it hard to get the necessaries of life, while a bad harvest or a hard winter created an enormous amount of distress. Thus in 1767–1768 London was full of idle, starving, reckless men, due to a period of trade depression. Workmen were being driven off the land in the country, and as often as not they drifted to London to swell the discontented mob of unemployed. Strikes for higher wages were events of recurring frequency. The sailors refused to man the merchantmen and held up outward bound ships. The watermen, the journeymen hatters, and the journeymen tailors were at different times in revolt against their masters. In the seventies the Spitalfield weavers were in open insurrection. They attacked the Duke of Bedford because he did not favour the exclusion of French silks, and when on strike, they broke into the shops of all weavers who would not join them, and destroyed looms to the number of 150 in two nights. At Wapping and Stepney the coalheavers conducted another bitter strike, and showed a brutal callousness in murdering the sister of one of their employer's agents, just as the weavers had stoned to death one who had informed against them. Bad times, unemployment, and low wages were constant problems in eighteenth-century London, but probably the worst time of all was after the close of the war in 1815. The full effects of a great commercial depression, "unparalleled in the history of our country," as the Common Council described it, broke over the city and its surrounding districts. A host of vagrants, men out of work and discharged soldiers, many of them foreigners, thronged the streets and besieged

the Mansion House, till the Lord Mayor's whole time was taken up in the work of relief. No help being forthcoming from the Government, the city was obliged to tackle a problem which, thanks to its position as the capital, was national rather than local. The disturbances which this distress produced all over the country were represented in the London district by the Spa Field Riots of 1816. Only the intervention of the Lord Mayor with a paltry following of two Aldermen and five police arrested a disastrous orgy of fire and destruction. The Corporation was by no means blind to the terrible economic state of the country; riots they knew were but the natural expression of widespread distress, and when the dwelling of the secretary of the Spa Fields meeting, which developed into the riot, was searched, it was found that he and his two daughters were living in one wretched room of which the only furniture was two piles of bedding on the floor. With steady persistency the Common Council declared that the only way to better the situation was to remove crying grievances, and that the only possible first step towards this was the reform of Parliament.

Whatever the position of the craftsmen in good employment, there were beneath this class the serried ranks of the casual labourer, who were the people who suffered in these hard times. The women of the poorer class also had to feel the full effects of them. Much of the hard work was done by these women, notably the market gardening around the town, and the "codders," as they were called, when they came to sell their produce from door to door, were as famous for the length of their tongues as the fish-wives of Billingsgate. Most of the women in more comfortable circumstances were mainly busied about their houses at a time when much of the apparel of the household, besides many other things that are now invariably purchased in a shop, was made at home. The very wealthiest of London women did little else but dress themselves and play cards, but the city housewife was indeed cumbered with

much serving, since she rarely employed more than one servant, if that. A class apart in eighteenth-century London was that of the servants. Only the really wealthy merchant and the aristocracy of the West End allowed themselves the luxury of domestic servants, who were as a rule a disorderly rabble, who battened on their master and his guests. Men-servants indeed were a particularly disorderly class. They robbed, drank, and frequently were the agents of receivers of stolen goods. By common consent tipping was the curse of the age, and it was noted as a peculiar London vice by more than one foreign visitor. Voltaire complained of it; Pollnitz, Frederick the Great's Master of the Horse, was very bitter on the subject, and the Swiss naturalist de Saussure gives a long description of the lengths to which the system went in one of his letters: "If you wish to pay your respects to a nobleman and to visit him, you must give his porter money from time to time, else his master will never be at home to you. If you take a meal with a person of rank you must give every one of the five or six footmen a coin when leaving. They will be arranged in a line in the hall, and the least you can give them is 1s. each, and should you fail to do this you will be treated insolently the next time. My Lord Southwell stopped me one day in the park, and reproached me most amicably with having let some time pass before going to his house to take soup with him. 'In truth, my lord,' I answered, 'I am not rich enough to take soup with you often.' His lordship understood my meaning and smiled."

The keeping of these servants was in itself an act of snobbery, and was in many instances meant as an ostentatious exhibition of luxury. A love of pomp and show was by no means confined to the West End. City tradesmen and their wives loved to ape the ways of fashion and to seize opportunities for the display of wealth and importance which they did not possess. The elaborate finery both of men and women is one indication of this, but it is perhaps best seen in the pomp and show exhibited on such occasions

as funerals and weddings. All corpses, if possible, were allowed to lie in state; the trappings of men and horses as the body was borne to the grave were of the most elaborate nature; all, whether they possessed arms or not, put up a hatchment over the door, even to the length of a publican's widow using the royal arms for this purpose, as it was the sign of the house. Pamphleteers made merry over this desire for display, and described how a widow would lie in a bed dressed in black to receive the condolences of friends, or a cheesemonger, who had never ridden in his life, would be borne to the grave in a hearse followed by three coaches each with six horses. It was an age of maudlin sentimentality, when a man not only used black-edged paper, then coming into use, after the death of his wife, but insisted on a crow-quill pen and black sand for blotting what he had written. It was in the eighteenth century that this spirit of funeral pomp pervaded London, and those who visit the poorer quarters of the town to-day will know that it is not yet entirely dead. Weddings were as a rule as gorgeous, if not so sentimental. A man strove to outdo his neighbours in display on these occasions, and so serious was the drain on his resources that he often encouraged his children to marry in a clandestine manner.

Among the many social problems which London had to face in the eighteenth century, possibly none were so far-reaching as the abuses which had grown up around the marriage law. A marriage was legal if performed by a priest of the Church of England, wheresoever and whensoever the ceremony was celebrated. The result was that chapels were built as a speculation for what they would bring in marriage fees. These places were outside the control of the bishop, and though often quite respectable, the clergy in charge made no attempt to discover whether there was any impediment to a marriage they were asked to perform. One of the most famous of these marriage parsons was the Rev. Alexander Keith, who made " a very bishopric of a revenue," and was credited with marrying 6000 couples a year. He,

like many others, advertised his services in the public prints, and in 1744 had this advertisement in the *Daily Post :* " To prevent mistakes the little new chapel in Mayfair, near Hyde Park Corner, is the corner house opposite to the city side of the great chapel and within ten yards of it, and the minister and clerk live in the same corner house where the little chapel is, and the licence on a crown stamp, minister and clerk's fee, together with the certificate, amount to one guinea as heretofore, at any hour till four in the afternoon. And that it may be better known, there is a porch at the door like a country church porch."

The popularity of this type of marriage is testified by the records of these parsons. It was proved before Parliament that 2954 couples had been so wedded in four months, and one man confessed to uniting 173 couples in one day. But many of these Fleet parsons, as they were called, were not of the respectable type of Keith. There were in London hundreds of men in priests' orders who had fallen into a life of vice, and haunted all kinds of disreputable places in the hope of earning a few pence for performing the marriage ceremony. They beset the Fleet prison, in the chapel of which these clandestine marriages first took place, and whence they got their name; they were retained as part of the establishment by owners of taverns and houses of ill-fame. The result was that it was far too easy to get married. Young heirs under the influence of liquor were bound to impossible mates, and a whole system of blackmail sprang up, whereby men were faced with an alleged pre-contract when about to marry, an unprincipled Fleet parson having been bribed to swear to the fact. The worst of these abuses were removed by Lord Hardwick's Marriage Act of 1753, which introduced the present system of banns or licence, and made the consent of guardians necessary for licences granted to minors.

A still greater social problem had to be faced in the matter of drink. Drunkenness had been known in London at least since the days when Fitz-Stephen complained of the

" immoderate drinking of fools," but there is evidence that it did not become a universal vice till the close of the seventeenth century. Throughout the eighteenth century drunkenness was considered more a virtue than a vice. Statesmen like Bolingbroke and Walpole, and moralists like Addison, all habitually drank too much. The London tradesman considered an evening ill spent if his faculties were quite clear as he returned home, as we gather from diaries and records, and for the poor, drink was often a substitute for food. The chief beverage of the latter was not so much beer as gin, thanks to the encouragement to distilling given after the Revolution of 1688, and the effects were terrible to the health and moral stamina of the Londoner. Hogarth has left us two lurid pictures entitled " Beer Street " and " Gin Lane," and from other evidence that we possess we can hardly accuse the satirical artist of exaggeration. In 1750 the London doctors reported that there were 1400 cases of illness, most of them hopeless, directly traceable to gin. Next year in his police report Fielding declared that gin was " the chief sustenance of more than 100,000 people in the metropolis," while the Grand Jury of Middlesex attributed nearly all the crime in the London area to drink. As you walked down a street you could see in the windows of a tavern the legend, " Drunk for a penny, dead drunk for twopence," and in the better houses clean straw was provided in the cellars, where the effects might be slept off. This state of affairs constituted both a national and a civic danger. Between 1751 and 1753 something was done in the way of legislation to check this scourge. Fines were imposed on unlawful distilling, only ten-pound householders in London were to be granted retail licences, and the powers of magistrates to grant these licences were restricted. Even then there remained much to do, but these measures had some effect ; the cases of dropsy, so dangerously on the increase in London, grew fewer, and the end of the century saw the inhabitants of the capital more sober and more healthy.

Drunkenness helped to aggravate the tendency to dis-

order, which was never more rampant in London than in the eighteenth century. Again and again mobs seized command of the city, and there was no effective organization to cope with them. But quite apart from these periodical outbursts, there were persistent acts of violence in the streets, and outrages of the grossest kind went unpunished. In 1712 there was an outburst of organized ruffianism which defied the authorities for some time. Bands of young men, of good social position, wandered about seeking whom they might assault for the pure love of the thing. They called themselves "Mohawks," and had a series of unpleasant tricks, to which they gave names. "Tipping the lion" meant to squeeze the nose of their victim flat and bore out his eyes; "Sweating" meant to surround some person and prick him lightly with their swords till he fell down exhausted; the "Dancing masters" made men caper by thrusting swords into their legs, and yet another amusement was to put some matronly lady in a barrel and roll her down the steep descent of Snow Hill. By degrees the bands of Mohawks were broken up, but it still remained the fashion for gilded youths to commit outrages and insult peaceful citizens. Frequently the old watchmen were beaten, and "boxing a Charlie" was a recognized sport, which consisted in coming up behind the sort of sentry-boxes which sheltered the watchmen and upsetting them face downwards with their occupants inside. Besides these irresponsible individuals there were the regular robbers and highwaymen who infested both the streets of the town and the roads leading out into the country, and so bold did they become that they flaunted themselves in broad daylight. In 1744 the Lord Mayor and Aldermen protested to the King that outrages were committed on citizens at times and in places deemed safe hitherto, and from Strawberry Hill Horace Walpole wrote that "one is forced to travel even at noon as though one was going into battle." Something was done from time to time to mitigate the nuisance. In 1697 the "Liberties" attaching to Whitefriars and the Savoy were

abolished by Act of Parliament. These had managed to retain the right of sanctuary which dated from the time when the former was a monastery and the latter a royal palace, and they had become the happy hunting-grounds of criminals, refuges whence they emerged to prey upon the unfortunate Londoners. But what was lost to the criminal classes in the Strand was claimed by them in Southwark in the region known as the Mint, which had really no legal right of sanctuary, but which became a region that defied the arm of the law. Something was done to meet the open defiance of the law in this district by an Act of 1723 making it felony to obstruct a writ, and empowering the sheriff of Surrey to call out the militia to arrest a desperate criminal.

In the city, arrangements were made for lighting the streets, so as to make it less easy to commit outrages under cover of darkness. From the days of the rebuilt city there had been some attempt in this direction. Contractors had been empowered in return for an annual payment of £600 to levy 6s. on every householder who did not hang out a light in front of his house. On their part they were compelled to place a light before every tenth house, if none were unofficially provided, but this was only obligatory from Michaelmas to Lady Day and then only till midnight and on nights when there was no moon. In 1736 the Lord Mayor and Aldermen were empowered to erect glass lamps themselves and to levy a rate for the purpose, the result of which was that soon there were 15,000 lamps in the city. Almost at once a diminution of crime was seen, but even then robberies were only too frequent, and the lighting of the streets did not apply to those populous districts outside the city boundary.

The great difficulty with which the authorities were faced was the entire lack of any efficient police force. When Henry Fielding, the novelist, was commissioned to report on the existing organization, he declared that the watchmen and constables were quite useless. " They are chosen out of those poor decrepit people, who are from their want of bodily

strength rendered incapable of getting a livelihood by work. These men, armed only with a pole, which some of them are scarcely able to lift, are to secure the persons and houses of his Majesty's subjects from the attacks of well-armed villains. If the poor old fellows should run away, none I think can wonder, unless it be that they were able to make their escape." We have also the evidence of Horace Walpole that such as were bodily whole were more a danger than a protection to London inhabitants. "The greatest criminals in this town are the officers of justice," he wrote, and proceeded to give an illustration of how a party of constables, having become very drunk, were seized with an unwonted desire to execute the law. They therefore proceeded to arrest every woman they met as an undesirable character, and shut their unfortunate victims up in St. Martin's Round House. In the morning, of twenty-six prisoners, four were dead, two died later, and twelve were ill for weeks owing to the way they had been crowded into a small space. Their superiors were no better than the constables, for the magistrates were so venal that Fielding declares that impartial justice was only secured when neither side could afford to bribe. Again something was done by way of reform in this direction. Henry Fielding was made a Bow Street Magistrate, and he and his brother, who succeeded him, did much towards purging the channels of justice and towards creating an efficient police force. Strong and honest men were chosen for the new constables, who were the direct ancestors of the police introduced by Sir Robert Peel. They also tried to tap the sources from which criminals were drawn by gathering together destitute boys, clothing and feeding them and drafting them ultimately into the navy.

In every way London was losing her old character. More and more the city was developing into the metropolis. She was becoming a social centre in a way she had never been before, and her inhabitants more distinct in habits and methods of thought from their fellows who lived in the country. Perhaps nowhere is this more apparent than in

their amusements. The days when the Londoners went out for a day's hunting in Epping Forest, or enjoyed field sports in Smithfield, had gone for ever, and their main recreations were now of a more townified order. When the day's work was over, they met for social intercourse in some place of public resort. Perhaps the most typical product of the age was the London Coffee House. The growth of these establishments synchronizes with the re-building of the city in the seventeenth century, for in 1674 we find a " Women's petition against coffee," which was a protest against the way men were forsaking their homes for the places where society might be found and enjoyed over coffee. Originally places of promiscuous public entertain-ment, they soon became specialized in their *clientèle*, and each was associated with a certain class or interest. The Whigs monopolized the Cocoa Tree and Ozinda's, the Tories were found at the St. James's. In the city Garaway's was the haunt of the aristocrats who, against their will, had to do business there from time to time ; Robin's was fre-quented by the wealthy merchants ; Jonathan's was the home of the stockbroker. At Child's or the Chapter House you would find the clergy, at Hamlin's the Dissenters. Others were given over to the famous literary coteries, though they sometimes met in houses used by other classes of people. The booksellers, for instance, were mostly fre-quenters of the Chapter House, and there you must go should you want to hear the latest literary gossip, or what books were shortly to be placed upon the market. Of all these literary societies none were so famous as those where Dr. Johnson was to be found, roaring out his beliefs, and silencing all opponents by the superiority of his vocal artillery. The greatest intellectual centre of all was to be found at Old Slaughter's in St. Martin's Lane, which nearly all men of artistic or literary fame frequented. In due course the Coffee House gave way to the Club, where ex-clusiveness was carried still further. The London Club was an ancient institution, and in Elizabethan London had been

the centre of dramatic and literary life. The club of the eighteenth century was sometimes developed from a Coffee House, sometimes had a separate and independent origin, but always began with a few members, and slowly extended its borders. Even then there was a bond which held all the members together, and some qualification in keeping with the spirit of the society was demanded from those who sought admission. Some clubs were political in intention like the Kit Cat, others intellectual such as the Royal Society ; the more purely social and fashionable ones, where gambling was the chief diversion, were Almack's, later known as Brooks's, and White's.

Tired of the coffee house or the club, the Londoner could turn for entertainment to the theatre. At the Restoration, the stage had sprung once more into favour. In the days of the Great Fire there were no less than eight such houses of entertainment, one of the finest being the " Duke's Theatre " in Portugal Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, which had been designed by Inigo Jones. Not far away was the " National Theatre " in Drury Lane, opened originally in 1663, but burnt down nine years later. Rebuilt by Wren in 1674, the new building survived till 1791, when it was again rebuilt, only to be demolished by fire in 1809, and finally opened in its present shape in 1812. Throughout this period " Old Drury " was the centre of all dramatic art, being the place where all the chief plays were produced, from those of Dryden to Sheridan's " School for Scandal." In it, too, appeared all the great actors and actresses of the day, including Garrick and Mrs. Siddons. It was then as now in the heart of theatre-land, with its rival hard by in Covent Garden. Sometimes men might wander as far as Sadler's Wells for their evening's entertainment, but this was ever more the resort of city tradesmen than of the fashionable patrons of the drama. In matter of behaviour the audiences of the eighteenth century had not greatly improved on their predecessors of the Elizabethan age, and in 1763 both Covent Garden and Drury Lane were wrecked by infuriated

patrons who resented the attempt to abolish the system of
paying half price after the third act.

For the masses the occasions for jollification were becom-
ing far fewer. The old joyous celebrations which punc-
tuated the year's work in the past were slowly decaying.
May Day, Lord Mayor's Day, Queen Elizabeth's Day, and,
at least till the middle of the century, Restoration Day were
kept, but they were not general public holidays as of yore,
and they had been shorn of their old associations. On May
Day there were no poles reared or garlands hung round the
house, but the chimney sweeps made holiday and the carters
decorated their horses. The Lord Mayor's Pageant, which
had been so glorious in the early seventeenth century, when
great dramatists and poets were employed to give it dis-
tinction, was slowly dying, and by the end of the century it
was even less imposing than the procession of to-day. Some
of the old sports still lingered, for bear-baiting was fairly
frequent, and cock-fighting was a passion with all classes.
Among quieter pastimes was the visiting of the various
pleasure gardens which sprang up in several places, though
sometimes even here the riotous tendencies of the age,
which were by no means confined to one class, were apparent.
Concerts and masquerades were the chief amusements of
these resorts, of which the most frequented were those in
Marylebone, Vauxhall, and the Spring Gardens, where at
present the London County Council has its central office.
The fair was not quite dead as a centre of jollification in
London, though it was doomed. In hard winters, when the
Thames was frozen, a fair was held on the ice between the
bridges. There were theatre booths, puppets, and musicians;
food and drink were sold and the population made merry,
despite the inevitable misery that would follow the hard
winter. One of the most famous ice fairs was in 1788–89,
and the winter of 1814 saw another. Down to 1756 May
Fair was held on the site of the present Curzon Street, and
lasted for six weeks, during which the riff-raff of the neigh-
bourhood made merry, to the great disturbance of the

neighbouring occupiers, as the complaints of Lord Chesterfield testify. To-day only the name of the district recalls the old festival, and the " Lady Fair " in Southwark is even less remembered. Founded on the Charter granted by Edward IV to the city, securing to it certain rights over the borough of Southwark, it flourished well on into the eighteenth century, when its appearance has been recorded for us in one of Hogarth's pictures, which shows all the paraphernalia of the modern fair, if we exclude the joy-wheels and merry-go-rounds which steam power and mechanical invention have developed. The oldest survival of all was Bartholomew Fair, which had once been a centre of trade. It was many a long year since cloth had been sold in the Smithfield booths, and it was in the eighteenth century a fair of the ordinary type with its hobby-horses, theatrical clowns, wild beasts, tight-rope walkers and monstrosities now associated with the name of Barnum. By 1769 it had become such a resort of the dissolute and the rowdy that seventy-two special constables had to be enrolled to keep order, and though it lingered on till 1855 it was doomed like all the other relics of bygone social conditions.

With the dawn of the Victorian era London enters on her purely modern aspect. Mechanical invention and the tendencies of modern business and society have transformed the growing town into a vast inhabited area with little cohesion and also little corporate life. Even in the last few years the telegraph and the telephone, the Tube and the motor-bus have made a vast difference, and a new set of problems faces those who have the administration of this unwieldy district. Modern London has left far behind the little walled city overlooking the Thames, and yet she is its direct descendant. Only by looking back can the modern Londoner grasp the full significance of his present existence, for in broad outline the same influences are at work. In far-off days the Roman roads made London a centre of traffic just as the railways have done to-day. In far-off days it was

her merchants who took pride of place in city politics just as it is to-day.   It is indeed well for the modern Londoner as he hurries to business to remember the past, to let some well-known landmark speak to him of its historical associations, since by remembering the great deeds of his forbears, their independent spirit, their determination, their enthusiasm, and above all their pride in their city, he may gain courage and inspiration for the future.

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